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Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Comments on Iraqi Policy, Capabilities

Welcomes Peace Plan Acceptance

JN2302090091 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 23 Feb 91 pp 1, 5

[By Nirmin Murad, JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] The Soviet Union's eight-point plan to stop the war in the Gulf drew a positive, albeit guarded, response from Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials, although it does not include any reference to solving the Palestinian problem.

PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat was quoted Friday as saying Iraq's acceptance of the Soviet plan to end the Gulf war is what his organisation was "aspiring to" and should be examined by the United Nations and not the United States.

In a brief statement in Tunis, Mr. 'Arafat said that the Iraqi move indicated a "positive attitude," without making any reference to the absence of linkage between solutions to the Gulf crisis and the Palestine issue.

Analysts and observers could not explain why Mr. 'Arafat did not mention what appeared to be a concession on the Iraqi part. However, a senior aide to Mr. 'Arafat said that "the Iraqi acceptance (of the Soviet plan) based on the initial Iraqi proposal (of Feb. 15) to withdraw from Kuwait is a clear test of the intentions of the U.S.-led coalition and its compliance with U.N. resolutions."

Bassam Abu-Sharif, political adviser to the PLO chairman, told the Jordan Times in a telephone interview from Tunis that the Iraqi acceptance had opened "the door wide for the establishment of a stable and secure Middle East."

Mr. Abu-Sharif stressed the PLO's belief that linkage between the Gulf crisis and the Palestine issue was a political tool used to highlight the double standards of the West in dealing with the region's problems.

While saying that the world "connection"—rather than linkage—described the PLO's outlook on the Iraqi demands for a simultaneous withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait and Israel from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Mr. Abu-Sharif stressed that it was only a political tie.

"The connection between the Gulf crisis and the Middle East problem was always a political one and was never an issue of timetables as far as we are concerned," Mr. Abu-Sharif said.

The Iraqi acceptance was seen by the PLO as an "opportunity to settle the Gulf crisis politically and save the region from catastrophic results," he said.

At a press conference held here last week, stronger terms were used by Mr. 'Arafat to describe how he viewed "connection." "Tell the allies that if they want to have O-I-L, then they have to also take P-L-O," he said in describing that statement as the essence of "the Saddam initiative."

In late December, Palestinian sources said that it was left up to the PLO to decide when they felt enough political ground was covered on the Palestine issue so that linkage, as a formal condition, could be dropped by Iraq as a prerequisite for withdrawing from Kuwait.

Although Arab diplomats at the time could not explain the delay in an expected statement from the PLO to the effect that linkage was already forged, it was later said that the PLO leaders did not make that statement after Iraq told them that war was going to be forced on Baghdad even if the linkage issue was dropped.

A diplomatic source in Moscow told the Jordan Times over the weekend that two senior PLO officials were in the Soviet captial at the same time as the Iraqi foreign minister to "convince Iraq to accept the initiative."

According to the diplomat, who requested anonymity, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh and Mahmud 'Abbas, two senior PLO officials, were pressing the visiting Iraqi delegation, headed by Tariq 'Aziz, to accept the Soviet plan even though it contained no reference to the Palestinian problem.

Mr. Abu-Sharif, in his interview from Tunis, indicated that the palestine issue was still on the bargaining table between Iraq and the Soviet Union on the one hand and the U.S. and its allies on the other. "Everyone will be waiting for the Security Council to seriously address the Palestinian problem as soon as the crisis ends," he said. He made direct reference to pledges by U.S. President George Bush to address the Palestine issue as soon as the Gulf crisis ended.

"Bush himself made the connection," Abu-Sharif pointed out.

Says Iraq Prepared for Battle

LD2302175991 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Brother president Leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] says that Iraq's stand vis-a-vis the Soviet peace plan is positive and that the United States has played all the winning cards in its hands. There remains only one card, namely the ground battle.

He said the Iraqi Army is fortified and is prepared to wage all kinds of combat, from a desert war to a war in the villages and cities.

President Leader Abu-'Ammar believes that Iraq will use the petroleum card if the military situation forced it to. He asked: Does the West realize the scale of the catastrophe if 400 oil wells are set on fire? The consequences

wil not be confined to the State of Kuwait—and there will be no State of Kuwait when these wells are set on fire. The pollution will cover the entire region and may reach Japan, the Pacific Ocean, and U.S. shores if pushed by the wind.

Warns of Chemical Weapons Use

LD2502084491 Madrid Domestic Service in Spanish 0800 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat has told RNE that Spain's stance on the Gulf conflict has damaged Spanish-Arab relations. 'Arafat also predicted that the war will be long, and he did not rule out the use of chemical weapons.

[Begin 'Arafat recording in English with superimposed Spanish translation] It is clear that the U.S. troops and their allies have used napalm; they have acknowledged this; and it is prohibited internationally. It is an unconventional weapon. The British and the Americans especially are talking of using the tactical nuclear bomb. For this reason we must work with determination, because this may be a real catastrophe, a real disaster. Not only against Iraq, against all Arabs, against the peoples of the Middle East, but against the whole world. This is not a picnic. [end recording] That is an excerpt of an interview with the Palestinian leader recorded somewhere in Tunisia under impressive security measures.

Says Arabs To Lose in Gulf War

LD2402174791 Hamburg DPA in German 1722 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Tunis/Berlin (DPA)—Yasir 'Arafat, chief of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), sees the Arab states in their totality as the future losers of the Gulf war. A few hours before the expiry of the latest U.S. ultimatum, 'Arafat said in an interview with the alternative German "TAGESZEITUNG" (Berlin-Monday edition) in Tunis: "The whole Arab world will lose in this conflict." the Arab countries will not gain much; they will be unable to maintain the coalition with the Americans "against (the wishes of) their population".

Arafat expressed his conviction that the Palestine problem will "soon become again the subject of negotiations". The European attitude toward the PLO has changed only in its mood; its representations have not been closed down. The PLO chief also sees a chance for the resumption of the dialogue with the United States: "All enemies must at one time or another negotiate with each other."

Spain's Allied Support 'Mistake'

PM1402140691 Madrid ABC in Spanish 8 Feb 91 p 29

[Unattributed report: "'Arafat: 'Spain Is Making A Mistake By Taking Part In This Aggression'"]

[Text] Madrid—PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat has stated in an interview granted to the SER [Spanish Broadcasting Company] network and to Canal Plus that Spain's logistical support for the multinational force is "a big mistake, because it means that it is taking part in this aggression against Iraq. And this aggression is not just against Iraq but against all the Arab countries and against all the Islamic countries, because we now know that all the UN resolutions have been flouted with this aggression."

He also referred to the role which the EC is playing in this crisis. "This inhuman aggression has nothing to do with the Europeans' policy. How can the attack on Iraqi children, on the people of Iraq, be accepted? Everything—civilian targets, infrastructure, and so forth—is being destroyed. The explosives which have been dropped on Iraq over the past three weeks exceed all those which the allied offensive dropped on Germany during World War II. It is incredible."

Coalition Accused of 'Psychological War'

LD2502000191 Algiers Domestic Service in French 2200 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Let us return to this blackout on information right away with Bassam Abu-Sharif, the main adviser to Yasir 'Arafat, who speaks to us about it:

[Begin Abu-Sharif recording] We are in contact with Baghdad and we are also in contact with our office in Kuwait. The information put out by the coalition is false. It is a psychological war against the Arab world, against the Arab masses. It is a psychological war of propaganda against the Arab masses and the Iraqi people, but we have information that the attacks in the past 12 hours have failed to take Iraqi positions in a permanent way.

There have, of course, been skirmishes. There have been POW's, that is, Iraqis who have been arrested and so on; but at the same time there are many coalition soldiers who are now prisoners of the Iraqi Army.

The Iraqi Army is now fighting in a heroic manner, and we do not believe that the big battle has already started. It is only the introduction; these are only the first steps. Up to now Iraq has conducted itself fiercely and bravely against the coalition attack. [end recording]

PLO Statement Denounces Aggression Against Iraq

LD2402205391 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 24 Feb 91

["Text" of a statement by the PLO Executive Committee]

[Text] The Palestinian leadership this morning held an emergency meeting to discuss the new situation in light of the start of the American-Atlantic aggression against fraternal Iraq and its valiant Army and has issued the following statement:

The comprehensive ground offensive launched by the U.S. forces and its allies has exposed the U.S. determination to reject all peaceful settlements on the Gulf crisis and to ignore all regional and international efforts to solve it. Most prominent of these is the Soviet initiative based on Security Council Resolution No. 660, despite fraternal Iraq's acceptance of it, as well as the Palestinian efforts which, in conjunction with gracious Arab and international efforts, accompanied those moves to provide an opportunity to solve the conflict by peaceful means and to avert the spilling of blood, in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy.

The United States and its allies have insisted on implementing their previously drafted schemes against fraternal Iraq and its valiant Army, on striking at its military and economic capabilities, threatening Iraq's national sovereignty, and consequently dealing a blow to the Arab nation, its power, its rights, and its pan-Arab security.

Therefore, this American-Atlantic and allied aggression becomes void of every legitimate international justification or cover, and violates all resolutions of international legitimacy and those of the Security Council, which Iraq accepted within the context of the Soviet initiative.

The new U.S. aggression aims at the destruction of both Iraq and Kuwait, a matter which contradicts the interests of the Iraqi and the Kuwaiti peoples and the interests of all peoples of the region, after the possibility of solving the conflict by peaceful means and through the resolutions of international legitimacy had been ascertained.

The PLO has exerted its highest effort to halt the war and the aggression through direct contacts with the Iraqi leadership and the Soviet leadership and by presenting proposals which contributed to the crystalization of this initiative, in order to tackle the conflict before its escalation and before reaching the stage of the final and total explosion. These moves were motivated by the aim of defending the interests and rights of our Arab nation and the peoples of the region and to thwart the U.S. scheme aimed at the expansion of the war in order to achieve the U.S. objectives: imposing colonial hegemony, controlling the fate of our Arab and Islamic nation as well as the peoples of the Third World, and controlling their resources and their future.

Fraternal Iraq is today standing valiantly steadfast in order to confront the flagrant aggression by the United States and its allies, after its aggressive objectives against Iraq's sovereignty, and against the rights and interests of the Arab, Islamic, and the region's peoples have been finally uncovered.

The current situation requires that the Security Council shoulder its responsibilities, following the U.S. violation of the international resolutions, to stop the war and the aggression and to put an end to the U.S.-led attempts to impede the role of the United Nations and other international efforts and its efforts to impose the dictatorship of one state on the world.

The PLO calls upon the Arab and Islamic peoples and states, the nonaligned countries, and the friendly states, at the front of which are the Soviet Union and China, to stand firm with fraternal Iraq in its confrontation against aggression and invasion. We are confident that the valiant Iraqi Army will defeat the aggression on its homeland, protect rights and sanctities, and foil the aims of the American-Atlantic invasion.

Our Palestinian people stand firmly by Iraq's steadfastness and heroism against this premeditated aggression by the U.S. Administration and its allies, who have intentionally and arrogantly ignored all peace initiatives. We stress that the energies of our Arab and Islamic nation, the peoples of the Third World, all free men of the world, and the peaceloving forces are apt to thwart the schemes of aggression, the invaders, and their followers.

May God protect Iraq, its leadership, its Army, its people, and its land as a shield for our Arab and Islamic nation, its honor, and dignity. Let God make victorious whoever he choses; God is strong and capable. [Koranic verse]

Official Calls for Arab Boycott of U.S.

NC2402164191 Paris AFP in English 1522 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Tunis, Feb 24 (AFP)—A senior official of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, on Sunday called on Arab and Islamic countries to "boycott the United States and support Iraq militarily".

Mr. Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of the PLO's information department and also a member of its executive committee, said: "This destructive war, undertaken by the United States and its allies against Iraq, is directed against us, against all Arab and Islamic countries."

He appealed to "the Arab and Islamic countries to boycott the United States politically and economically and to support Iraq militarily".

He predicted that "the war will be long", as Iraq has "the military ability to resist".

Mr. Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh's call echoed an appeal from Damascus earlier by the Popular Front of the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), one of the three main factions in the PLO.

The PLO has been politically sympathetic to Iraq throughout the conflict, adopting a stance that has reportedly caused the oil-rich Gulf monarchies to cut back their financial aid for the organisation.

Palestinian income in the Israeli-occupied territories have also been hit by the departure of thousands of Palestinian expatriate workers from Kuwait since the Iraqi invasion of August 2.

DFLP Welcomes Soviet Plan, Iraqi Response

NC2302135391 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Feb 91 p 15

[Text] Amman—Ra'fat Salih, member of the Political Bureau of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], has welcomed Iraq's positive response to the Soviet plan, noting that this response underscores Iraq's eagerness to find a just and honorable solution to the Gulf crisis and all regional issues. He added that the Soviet peace plan and Iraq's response have placed the allied states, especially the United States, in a real dilemma, especially now that the real objectives of this aggression—namely, the destruction of Iraq, the obstruction of its national struggle, and the imposition of U.S. hegemony over the peoples of the east—have been exposed.

Urges USSR, PRC To Rescind Resolution 678

LD2502102891 Algiers APS in Arabic 0840 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] Algiers, 25 Feb (APS)—Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], has called on the USSR, the PRC, and the nonaligned countries to rescind Washington's mandate under Resolution 678. He has also called on the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution halting the aggression against steadfast Iraq.

Following his arrival in Algiers from Tunisia yesterday, Hawatimah described the act of aggression against Iraq by the United States and its allies as "a blow to the Soviet initiative and a manifestation of disdain for it and for all the forces of peace in the world" which declare "No to death for the sake of oil."

Hawatimah added that the ground aggression includes the invasion of Iraqi territory and that its objective has become flagrantly clear—it is to destroy the progress of Iraq and kill its valiant people. He added that the farce of the "liberation of Kuwait" became evident after Iraq agreed to withdraw from Kuwait in accordance with UN Resolution 660 and in compliance with the Soviet initiative.

Hawatimah called on Moscow, Beijing, and the nonaligned countries to rescind the mandate given to Washington and its allies for the use of force. He urged them to convene a UN Security Council meeting to put a stop to the aggression and rescind the mandate provided by Resolution 678.

He also called on the people of Egypt and their national forces to go out into the streets to protest Mubarak's disdain of pure Arab blood and the offering of the officers and men of Egypt in the vanguard of the inferno of the ground aggression against Iraq. This encouragement by Washington of agent behavior has opened the door to inter-Arab civil wars and reminds the Arab nation of al-Sadat's treacherous aggression against Libya, he said. Hawatimah added that Washington's agents should remember the assassination of al-Sadat at the hands of the sons of Egypt.

Al-'Abbas Says U.S. Aims To 'Destroy Iraq'

NC2502031891 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 20 Feb 91 p 5

[Interview with Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) Secretary General Muhammad 'Abbas, also known as Abu-al-'Abbas, by Hisham al- Shaykh 'Isa and Hashim Hasan—date, place of interview not given]

[Text] [AL-THAWRAH] How do you view Iraq's steadfastness in the face of the American-Zionist-Atlantic aggression?

['Abbas] Iraq's steadfastness did not surprise pan-Arab and world progressive forces at all, although it is a strong slap in the face of the enemy's forces, which was counting on a quick victory against Iraq, and which massed large fleets for this purpose in accordance with their erroneous calculations regarding the achievement of a quick and easy victory.

This splendid steadfastness also expresses the honesty of the Iraqi fighters, the wisdom of the Iraqi leadership, and the courageous political decision. In history, no single country, regardless of capability or size, has been exposed to such a large- scale aggression in which 30 countries, including major countries led by the imperialist countries, have participated in a war using all the destructive technologies of oppression and massing the largest air fleet.

It is also natural for an aggression of this scale and nature to damage its target. We are at the beginning of the second month of the battle, and Iraq is continuing its legendary steadfastness, confrontation, patience, and jihad [struggle], preventing the enemy from achieving any of its goals, except the destruction of civilian and economic installations and facilities like bridges, shelters, and hospitals, which do not constitute any military threat to the superpowers and their military machine. Iraq's steadfastness is clearly evinced by the enemy's conflicting assessments of the military position. At the beginning of the battle, the enemy said it achieved great victories, only to say the following day that it achieved limited victories. The enemy has recently covered up its failure by shelling residence quarters and inflicting casualties among civilians, since these are the easiest operations for it to carry out.

Iraq's steadfastness epitomizes the dignity of the Iraqi and Arab individuals, and has undermined the enemies' calculations about the battle and foiled their attack against our peaceful Iraq.

[AL-THAWRAH] What are the real goals of the United States and its allies in this unjust and aggressive war?

[Abbas] We are aware of several undeclared goals, along with the declared ones. The American enemy had prepared a political decision to strike developed, strong, and cohesive Iraq, which has honestly expressed the nation's aspirations by developing its economic infrastructure.

Therefore, developed and strong Iraq cannot be accepted by the Zionist and American circles, which tried one and one-half years before 2 August to find justification for an aggression against Iraq. I do not believe that the main reason for the war was Kuwait. According to the imperialist logic and the so-called new world order, there should be no special role for the Arab nation outside the imperialist framework. They also do not want a new, strong Iraq.

The U.S. goal is to destroy Iraq and its pan-Arab and progressive role as well as the vanguard Arab-Islamic force it represents. The goals are being revealed by the progress of war. They are talking about new goals for the war and postwar arrangements. This exposes their hostile position and their goals.

The attack on Iraq is aimed at hitting the center of pan-Arab action and Arab independence and awakening, in order to place our region under imperialist hegemony, turn the peoples of the region into consumers of Western products, and enabling the West to plunder our wealth and determine the fate of our people and region. This means a return to the old colonialism in a new form. In my view, this is the main goal.

[AL-THAWRAH] Will Iraq's steadfastness force the enemies to abandon their goals and reconsider some of their calculations?

[Abbas] This level of Iraqi steadfastness will prevent them from achieving any of their goals, but they will continue their aggressive campaign and will launch a ground attack—I believe the ground attack is imminent—because the one-month air raid has not achieved the aggressors' aims. The ground attack will certainly inflict huge losses on them.

[AL-THAWRAH] What have the armed Palestinian factions done to strike American, Atlantic, and Zionist interests at this stage?

[Abbas] In fact, all the Palestinian factions stand by Iraq. As for us, we are using all our potential against the enemy, and our strugglers are carrying out their duties. Our program for confronting America and its interests is continuing. We have made important achievements in this regard, and we will deal stronger blows in the near future by escalating our fight against America and its allies.

The battle is pan-Arab, and everyone should use everything in his power to serve the battle and and to take action in light of this fateful war being waged by Iraq on behalf of the Arab nation.

[AL-THAWRAH] What are the political and military aspects of the Iraqi missile attacks against the Zionist entity?

[Abbas] We know that the Israeli society is a racist, fascist, and aggressive society, and it can be deterred only through force. When this entity feels that its future is unstable, new facts and theories will emerge. There may be a reversal of the Zionist settlement theory. The outcome of the Iraqi action against the Zionist entity will appear in the near future, because it is the first time this entity has suffered painful blows, and the first time the settler has suffered from a real threat to his security and has been compelled to sleep in shelters. There is real instability in Israel. This will make the Zionists reconsider their presence in the occupied Arab territories.

Other indications include the decrease in emigration to Israel by 70 percent, and the redoubling of the number of those fleeing occupied Palestine.

As for the effect of the Iraqi missiles, it suffices for us to read the Zionist reports in which official surveys indicate that more than 22,000 buildings were damaged as a result of the Iraqi missiles. Despite that, in many cases the enemy has kept its losses secret. Information we have received from the occupied territories indicates that most targets which Iraqi missiles were aimed at have in fact been hit.

The effects of war are clear in northern as well as central Tel Aviv, where the Defense Ministry headquarters and various military institutions are located. What is more important is that launching an Iraqi missile at the Zionist entity has political value. The Iraqi leadership has put its words into action, and the Arab can and will strike Israel. This has given our people in the occupied territories extraordinary psychological power. Today, the Palestinian citizen sees the Zionist settlers terrified as they flee Tel Aviv to the West Bank to avoid the Iraqi missiles and their fires. It has become usual to see convoys of cars fleeing the occupied Palestinian cities to the West Bank in the evening. The Zionist enemy tries in vain to conceal and hide its massive losses and the state of fear in which the Zionist settlers are living.

[AL-THAWRAH] How do you see the future of the Arab region and the world after these events?

[Abbas] The future of the region and the world depends on the outcome of these events. The guidelines of the new world toward these events will be drawn on the basis of the final outcome throughout our region. Many changes will take place regardless of the direct results. The future will bring about the fall of all those who supported the aggression and betrayed their nation. Iraqi steadfastness has embodied a great psychological victory for the Arab individual, in a manner which befits the Arab nation.

We want the Arab individual to own his future will, and participate in making peace. The enemy wants the complete opposite. The future map will be drawn in accordance with the outcome of the current situation.

[AL-THAWRAH] How do you view the recent Iraqi initiative?

['Abbas] We view the recent Iraqi initiative within the context of the honorable battle Iraq is launching. This initiative has clearly responded to the enemy's demagoguery, and revealed its stances and the falsehood of its positions. At the same time, it has contributed to revealing the enemy's actual, unannounced intentions, and has addressed world public opinion with the logic of one who is concerned with peace and the blood of the peoples, without abandoning the principal issues related to the essence of our pan-Arab tenets and our objectives as a nation. We characterize this initiative as courageous and wise, because it does in fact need courage and wisdom, which confused the hostile alliance, succeeded in gaining fresh Arab and international support, and clearly pointed to the just Iraqi aims, which do not conflict with the other nations. To summarize, this initiative is in fact the most clever and courageous.

[AL-THAWRAH] What is your comment on the so-called new security order in the region, and the role of some agent Arab parties in it?

['Abbas] Some agent Arab tools who mortgaged their positions to the enemies were unable to maintain their personal security—so how are they to maintain the future of the region? Those rulers have nothing to do with the interests of their peoples. They are seeking ways to shield themselves under the slogan of Arab security and have formulated matters in a manner that coincides with the U.S. position. They have ignored the essence of pan-Arab security as embodied in the Palestine question. They have spoken of priorities that are the same as those the United States spoke of years ago. This contradicts the concept of pan-Arab security and Arab ambitions.

This minority of Arab rulers are the same ones who have continuously stood—some in a direct way and others in an indirect way—at the side of our enemies and rendered them many services.

In conclusion, the recent events have revealed the extent of their conspiracy and connection to the United States. They are now trying to organize their policies within the framework of the U.S.- West program, which calls for acknowledging the Zionist entity, finding solutions for the Palestine question in the U.S. style, plundering the wealth of the Arab nation, and controlling the Arab individual, while agreeing to be instruments in the hands of the United States to humiliate the Arab individual.

Palestinian 'Figures' Plan 'Arafat Resignation

PM2102165691 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Feb 91 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Political Sources Tell AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Palestinian Figures Active In Secret To Seek Agreement on Postwar Arrangements"]

[Text] Damascus, Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Information obtained from political sources in several Arab capitals indicates that several Palestinian quarters and figures are making constant efforts in preparation for the period after the Gulf war and the liberation of Kuwait. These sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT yesterday that the Palestinian efforts are aimed at ensuring a continued Palestinian presence in the postwar peace and security arrangements in the region through a Palestinian leadership that is not connected in any way with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's regime, whether or not this regime remains in power.

The sources also told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that several independent Palestinian figures, including politicians and economists, have had contacts with other figures in the occupied territory during the past few weeks, and that coordination has taken place between Palestinian organizations opposed to the current PLO chairman and certain forces within the PLO itself which have been against supporting Iraq. According to these sources, the purpose of all these contacts and this coordination is to establish a plan for Palestinian moves in the postwar phase in order to avoid any further political harm being done to the Palestinian cause when peace and security arrangements are introduced in the region after the war.

The sources said that initial reports indicate that the Palestinian quarters and figures involved in this activity have so far succeeded in their contacts with several Arab capitals in obtaining two main assurances:

1. The support of 12 Arab states—including two Arab Maghreb states—for a new PLO leadership after the dismissal of the current chairman of the PLO.

2. The pledge that if Yasir 'Arafat refuses to resign and insists on clinging to the chairmanship of the PLO, these 12 Arab states will permit the new leadership to run the Palestinian embassies and offices in their own capitals and cities. They will also authorize the new leadership to receive the money deducted from the salaries of their Palestinian employees and workers. Furthermore, Beirut will be made the base of the new Palestinian leadership's political activities to ensure its independent decision-making.

The sources affirmed that free Kuwait will be in the forefront of states providing the alternative Palestinian leadership with every opportunity for financial and political support so as to enable it to continue its struggle to achieve Palestinian independence.

Palestinian Sources Review Saddam-'Arafat Talks

NC2402140491 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 24 Feb 91 pp 1, 14

[By Tawfiq 'Abid]

[Text] AL-DUSTUR has obtained some details of the meeting between His Excellency President Saddam Husayn and His Excellency Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat in Baghdad, the capital of peace, victory, and civilization, during the past few days. The information came from reliable Palestinian sources close to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat.

The sources told AL-DUSTUR: Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Baghdad after the planes of evil and aggression pursued him on the Amman-Baghdad highway. The president's car was forced to go very fast on the highway and was 5 km from his escorts—so as not to attract the attention of the killer pilots, who do not distinguish between civilian and military cars and between civilian and military targets.

The talks between leaders Saddam and 'Arafat were held in a simple place, and not a shelter. Saddam Husayn does not use shelters to protect himself from intensive air raids but stays among his people and brave soldiers, whom he knows well, especially the Presidential Guard, the backbone of the Iraqi Army.

The Palestinian sources said that 'Arafat first asked President Saddam Husayn about the military situation after 33 days of continued air raids. The answer was calm and full of confidence in Iraq's capability, even if the battles last three years, and that the losses were less than expected.

President Saddam Husayn, who was "confident," informed his brother Yasir 'Arafat, who was "anxious," about everything in Iraq—leadership, people, and territory. He said that the Iraqi Army's losses could not be mentioned but do not exceed a tenth of what they had announced. For example, they boasted that they had destroyed all the stationary and mobile missile launching pads. In fact, he said, they destroyed only two launching pads despite the round-the-clock surveillance through satellites, planes, and other espionage means.

This is due, as President Saddam Husayn said, to the Iraqi's skill and their excellent camouflage ability. The men of the missile force are "lions" in difficult times. They destroy the enemy's land and disappear in the heart of the land, which they love and which they are defending against the American-Atlantic-Zionist arrogance.

I would like to say to you, Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], that even if a large number of launching pads are destroyed, we will not be affected because the Military Industrialization Organization can manufacture 20 launching pads a day and that Baghdad's blacksmiths are making that launching pad, while the Americans, the British, and the French are claiming that they have saved their "spoiled child, Israel" from the danger of the Iraqi missiles.

I would like to point out, he said, that they concentrate their air raids on civilians and civilian facilities. He added: In fact, they have destroyed schools, hospitals, bridges, factories, and houses in the various Iraqi cities, but we will rebuild it. It is we who have built Iraq, and we will build it again. It is important to save the Third World from U.S. hegemony sc that we can live in pride and honor.

He added: The killers of women, children, and the elderly believe that attacking civilians will destabilize Iraq, but they forgot that 1.2 million [not further identified], in addition to the 6 million Iraqi citizens, are brought up on the ethics of chivalry, that there is no agent or deviant person among them, and that all of them are feeding Iraq and its territory with their souls and are ready for every development.

Regarding equipment and ammunitions, President Saddam Husayn said that his Armed Forces will not need any foreign bullet for three years, that the military factories can meet the needs of the Armed Forces, and that we have a sufficient supply. So, rest assured.

But what about the Zionist entity's interference in the aggression against Iraq? The Iraqi and Palestinian sides believe that this entity participated in the aggression from the beginning by launching missiles from the Negev desert or sending squadrons of warplanes. 'Arafat announced this at a news conference at the Guest Palace after he returned from Baghdad.

The two sides had identical views on the possible announcement of an Israeli participation in any of the following cases:

—If the ground battles are tipped in favor of Iraq, Israel will interfere to restore the balance.

—If the progress of war is tipped in favor of the forces of alliance, may God forbid, it will participate in the ground battle to get its share and its seat at the negotiating table.

—If any situation that threatens the alliance continues for a long time, it will interfere to strengthen the alliance.

The talks, which lasted three hours in the open and under the attacking planes, dealt with other issues. President Saddam then asked 'Arafat when he would return to Amman. 'Arafat said he would return on the night of the following day. He then asked him to convey a message of reassurance to His Majesty King Husayn. He told 'Arafat: I may not be able to meet you again. Inform my brother His Majesty King Husayn that his brothers in Iraq are in good condition, that he should not be anxious, and that the brave, faithful, and experienced men are lying in wait for those who have desecrated our land and sanctities and who have attacked our women, children, the elderly, and our cultural achievements.

Confidence permeated in the news conference held by Yasir 'Arafat at the Guest Palace. Journalists noticed optimism in his eyes as well as enthusiasm in his answers to the questions he was asked.

Quoting 'Arafat, a reliable Palestinian source told AL-DUSTUR: "'Arafat went to Baghdad pessimistic and returned optimistic." He added that the establishment of the independent Palestinian State, with Jerusalem as its capital, is closer than ever.

Radio Defends Palestinians' Pro-Iraq Stance

LD2402193991 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] O brothers: Official and media circles of the aggressive alliance states—Arab and foreign—concentrated on accusing the PLO and the Palestinian people of bias toward Iraq, considering it a major crime by the Palestinian people and their leadership. They then followed these accusations with threats of a negative outcome if the PLO continued its policy. Naturally, they do not forget to herald the virtues of jumping on America's bandwagon, and the great good that would befall the PLO and its people if it were to abandon its stand and align itself with the alliance of aggression.

To reassure everyone, we say to them: Search for another accusation that will bend us, as we cherish this accusation. We, all Palestinians—people and leadership—confess and admit to the accusation of standing by Iraq in the battle of the nation. We cherish the honor of Iraq's participation in the confrontation of the colonial-Zionist invasion of Arab land in defense of its sanctities. Furthermore, being in this position—with all its demands of sacrifice—provides us with the opportunity to point the finger, not just of accusation but of condemnation, at them, particularly those trumpets speaking in Arabic. They are the condemned and are accused of committing the crime of betraying the nation.

It is sufficiant for them to hear the judgement against them in the Arab street. They have tarnished the honor of Arab history by putting themselves in the service of the crusader and taking part in his campaign.

Our date with them is the judgement of history and the future.

VOP Reports Iraqi Missiles Hit Riyadh

LD2402180991 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] O Brothers, we have just received the following: The Iraqi missiles fired this morning on Saudi Arabia have destroyed the buildings of the Ministry of Defense and the building of the Ministry of the Interior in Riyadh.

All Saudi hospitals are closed, and they have no capability to receive any citizens, even for one bed.

Algeria

Foreign Ministry Supports Soviet Initiative

LD2202195291 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] The Algerian Foreign Ministry's spokesman stated a short while ago that Algeria today stressed its support for the Soviet initiative. Algeria said that the UN Security Council, which adopted the resolution that Iraq should withdraw from Kuwait, should alone and without any interference from anybody else stop the war immediately and specify the practical measures for the implementation of resolution No. 660.

Algeria called on the UN Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities immediately according to the UN Charter.

The Algerian Foreign Ministry said in its statement that the Iraqi acceptance of resolution No. 660, which specifies the necessity of the withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait without any conditions, ends any legitimate basis for the continuation of the war in Iraq.

Ministry Condemns Coalition's 'Blatant Violation'

LD2502095991 Algiers APS in Arabic 0800 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] Algiers, 25 Feb (APS)—A Foreign Ministry spokesman has made the following statement:

"In spite of the Iraqi acceptance of UN Security Council Resolution 660, the coalition forces have commenced the implementation of their decision to continue and step up the war imposed on the Iraqi people.

"This extremely grave decision completely contradicts the aims clearly specified by the UN Security Council.

"Thus, the true nature of this war has been confirmed. In effect, this war aims to destroy Iraq and the will to progress that it represents; it is directed against the refusal of the Arab nation and Third World peoples to bow their heads, and against civilized human heritage.

"Pointing out the heavy responsibility which the members of the coalition bear before history, Algeria strongly condemns this blatant violation of international ethics; equally, it condemns the distortion of the UN Security Council role.

"Algeria shares the suffering of the Iraqi people and stresses its complete solidarity with them during this great crisis.

"Algeria strongly appeals to the international conscience and to peace-loving countries and peoples to put a swift end to this genocide of the fraternal Iraqi people."

Commentary Assesses Bush's 'Inflexible' Stance

LD2302142291 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Mohamed Haloub commentary; read by announcer Nouara]

[Text] [Announcer] Following the Iraqi acceptance of the Soviet plan, everyone awaited U.S. reaction. That reaction came carrying impossible conditions which brought up the following question: Has the United States become the only one who can decide war or peace? Here is a commentary by Mohamed Haloub and read by Nouara:

[Nouara] U.S. President George Bush, who snatched the job of the official spokesman of the coalition forces, talked in a spirit of challenge when he specified the period of withdrawal as a few hours, beginning at 1800 today Algerian time. He added the warning that otherwise the Iraqi people will be exposed to grave dangers.

This inflexible American stance, which tries to exploit the Iraqi acceptance to deal with resolution No. 660 in order to gain more Iraqi concessions, proves beyond any doubt that Bush aims at dwarfing Iraq to the greatest possible extent and at exposing Saddam Husayn as the one who has become completely subjugated and collapsed.

This U.S. pursuit exposes Bush's commitment to the logic of war. In spite of Bush's embarrassment as a result of the Iraqi acceptance of the Soviet plan, he insists on the exposed maneuvers in order to force Iraq to retreat from the brave tendency toward peace. Bush put a condition that the Iraqi forces should withdraw from Kuwait within an impossible period of time and leave the equipment and weapons where they are. Iraq will never agree to this.

The obvious question today is: On what legal basis is the U.S. stance founded? The answer could be inferred from the official spokesman of the Foreign Ministry's statement which said: The Soviet-Iraqi talks have made it possible from now on to obtain bases for a peace proposal which constitute a serious and positive foundation for putting an end to the conflict. The members of the UN Security Council, according to paragraphs 2 and 4 of resolution No. 678, should study the situation which stems from the Iraqi acceptance of resolution No. 660 and adopt the necessary measures to establish international peace and security in the region. The continuation of the war, therefore, cannot be legally justified.

Algeria considers that the UN Security Council alone has the authority to impose an immediate ceasefire and to draw up the methods to implement resolution No. 660.

We can thus say that the moments of waiting yesterday before 1600 GMT—the time when Bush concluded his consultations—were another proof on Bush's violations of international legitimacy. We should have been waiting for a statement by UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar, but [words indistinct].

Bush Plan Produces 'Bad Consequences'

LD2302163591 Algiers APS in English 1036 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Algiers, 23 Feb (APS)—By answering on Friday the Soviet peace plan by a completely unrealistic ultimatum to Iraqi head of state, President Saddam Husayn, who has been peremptorily obliged to withdraw his troops from Kuwait within some 25 hours, U.S. President George Bush opted for outbidding, threatening chances of peace and inducing bad consequences on the situation.

The head of the White House more openly than ever means his refusal to negotiate peace within such a political, military and diplomatic situation of the conflict.

Washington and its anti-Iraqi allied forces and Israel, master of the field and principal beneficiary from the current crusade against Islam and the Arab world through Iraq, do clearly show their warlike intentions against third world countries and its national structures, even setting about its legitimate president, not to omit their criminal intentions against a people undergoing planned stages of an actual genocide.

It is unfortunately President George Bush's solemn and arrogant choice, in the name of the first world power, involving all financial and military powers in the world in this adventure. In return, things are more and more clarified but on the expense of peace since the Zionist and Western antogonism is more violently voiced, which is paradoxical at a time when a party to the conflict, that is Iraq, declares without any ambiguity to compell with international legitimacy in accordance with the UN resolution and reasserts to Moscow its acceptance of a total withdrawal from Kuwait. One could say that the liberation of Kuwait deserves such a mobilization of international law and world public opinion, if only preceeding Israeli faits-accomplis and other similar cases elsewhere knew the same treatment. This has been in the mind of American Zionist hegemonism advocates only a pretext to implement in the name of justice and universal reason a pre-established plan to destroy Iraqi economic, scientific and technological capabilities which constitutes an aggravating circumstance, even a crime against Iraqi people and all humanity.

While Baghdad resolutely engaged in peace patch and positively reacted to the Soviet plan and initiative, the USA disappoints the world by thwarting through its unsensible reaction the hope born in the world thanks to the USSR.

It is also both true and regrettable that the main allies of the USA within the coalition, that is European countries, particularly France, that aims and pretends to have a singular place in the Arab world and the Maghreb, did not influence the good sense, they even had ambiguous reactions. Therefore, the head of the White House undertook a complete cut-off with the US pragmatism and provoked his Iraqi counterpart for a duel confrontation. Does he have such a right? And could such a hazardous situation at the universal level be a person's problem? Furthermore, is it conceivable to think about a total withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait within 25 hours, such a U.S. step seems unrealistic at technical and material levels. As far as Washington is concerned, it only managed to throw away reason and good sense. Hence peace will have to wait. For how long? It falls within pacifist freedom-and-justice-loving forces at the international community, including in America, to exert all efforts so that this peace can flourish.

Egypt

Mubarak Confers With Defense Minister, Commanders

NC2402120291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1140 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Cairo, 24 Feb (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak held a meeting with senior Armed Forces commanders at the Presidential Palace today.

The meeting was attended by General Yusuf Sabri Abu-Talib, the commander in chief of the Armed Forces and defense minister; Lieutenant General Safiy-al-Din Abu-Shinaf, the chief of staff; Lieutenant General Ahmad Nasr, commander of the Air Force; and Major General Zahir 'Abd-al-Rahim, commander of the air defense forces.

The meeting was also attended by the chief of staff of operations and the chief of military intelligence.

Reaffirms Mission of Troops

NC2402145491 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 24 Feb 91

[News conference by President Husni Mubarak with unidentified reporters following his meeting with senior Armed Forces commanders at the Presidential Palace in Cairo, 24 February—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Some news agencies and newspapers today said Egyptian troops have entered Iraqi territory. Is this true, and what exactly is the task the Egyptian forces are entrusted with in the war to liberate Kuwait?

[Mubarak] I have said before that the Egyptian forces have a specific task: To contribute to the liberation of Kuwait and not to enter Iraq, because this is not part of their mission. What you have heard or what has been reported has no grain of truth in it at all. There is nothing secret here. There may be some news reports fabricated to stir up confusion, but the truth will be told; it will only be told after the operations are over. The Egyptian Armed Forces' task does not include entering Iraqi territory.

[Reporter] Mr. President, some people think the Soviet initiative might prevent a ground battle and lead to peace in the region. Is that true?

[Mubarak] In fact, I do not wish to go into the details of the Soviet initiative. There were few points in the Soviet initiative. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev phoned me yesterday and we discussed the subject. The points included may be ambiguous to the people at the theater of operations there; they might lead to complications and even exacerbate the tension, and they might lead to some kind of confusion in the theater of operation.

Had he wanted a solution, we have been talking about the solution for the past six months, since 2 or 3 August. Go back to what we have said. We forecast what is happening now, because we have experience in the world arena as a whole, and in wars, war theaters, and theaters of operations. We said from the beginning: Be careful, the situation is serious and will not be easy. We are reaching the end of the 20th century and a swift decision is needed because the world community as a whole, including the states supporting the operation, will not accept the occupation of Arab land. I do not want to say anything that might be understood as gloating over someone else's grief; but what about the Iraqi president's remarks at the May 1989 Rabat summit, the first Arab summit I attended, as well as what he said at the Arab Lawyers Union conference? He said: If Iraq does anything, stand against it.

The Soviet initiative may have delayed things, but it might also create a misunderstanding. The forces were put on a state of alert, and a state of alert cannot be delayed. If there was to be a solution, there was a solution. We say: Withdraw. No more than that—withdraw. Withdraw from Kuwait, with a Soviet initiative, with a French initiative, with an Egyptian initiative, with a U.S. initiative, even with an initiative from Mars. Withdraw. Withdraw and let the state be independent and let sovereignty return. This is what I have said from the first day.

[Reporter] Your Excellency, you were the first to say that as soon as the ground battle started, the Iraqi troops would surrender. Today, what you anticipated has indeed taken place. What is your (?comment) on this?

[Mubarak] Very regrettably, I cannot blame the Iraqi soldiers in the field. I blame the leaders who made the decision and failed to study the situation in detail. I predicted that there would be losses. What do you expect from troops that have been on a state of alert in Kuwait for six months, and not able to train? What do you expect from them, especially after they were given an ultimatum to withdraw by 15 January? Then the air campaign started, and the air bombardment went on. I think this was a clear signal that it was a serious matter and that there must be a withdrawal. Transportation means were hit, supplies to soldiers and troops were cut off. Of course, when the second ultimatum, or the second position, emerged—that is, withdrawal from Kuwait—the Iraqi leaders should have immediately withdrawn; the soldier is excused. The soldier there has nothing to eat; he eats one meal only, as the troops and officers themselves have said. How do you expect them to fight? Supply, fuel, spare parts cannot reach them, and they have no training. What do you expect from him? There is no water. What do you want from him? He is not made of wood. The Iraqi soldier is a human being, and, from the very first day, we showed concern for him as we show concern for our soldiers.

I listened to the radio yesterday and contacted everyone I could in the hope that he would make the decision and save the Iraqi Army and people. I sent him a message, which no one might have known about—I think I sent it the day before yesterday. I asked them [not further identified]: Please, you know how to contact him. Tell him: The situation is dangerous, dangerous, dangerous, and we are on the edge of war. If the ultimatum is not heeded, there will be a disaster. It was no use. I do not know why there is this intransigence. Why does one show intransigence regarding the interests of his own people?

[Reporter] Your Excellency made more than 27 appeals to save the Iraqi troops. Today the Iraqi president made a speech over the radio telling his soldiers to fight with every means they had. Is this the overall destruction Your Excellency warned against?

[Mubarak] Brother, tell me, how can he ask them to fight? I do not understand how the soldier can fight. The soldier is hungry; there is no food, no water, and he has nothing to keep him alive. Tell him to fight then. In fact, I hope—so that these people can be saved—that they will say: No, we will not fight. He should not have done it. To become a leader, one should not have to murder his people. The ruler's task is to see what his citizens want and how he can raise their standard of living. Look, for example, at our troops. I take care that our troops have all the means that will make the soldier and the officer have confidence and comfort when they enter a war. I hope not much blood will be spilled. This does not mean surrender, but the soldier is excused.

[Reporter] Thank you, Mr. President.

Appeals to Saddam To Accept Resolutions

NC2302193991 Cairo Egyptian Space Channel in Arabic 1910 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] In statements he made to correspondents tonight, President Husni Mubarak expressed regret because Iraq has not responded to the international community's proposals.

President Muabark said: The Arab people and the international community were waiting for a decision from the Iraqi president that would be compatible with justice and reason and would restore to the Kuwaiti people their right to their homeland and their legitimate government by withdrawing immediately and unconditionally from Kuwait.

The president then asked: Why has the Iraqi regime not agreed to the international community's proposals since it has accepted the principle of withdrawal from Kuwait and recognized the error it made on 2 August 1990?

President Mubarak addressed an appeal to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. He said: Every hour that passes means more destruction, and there is no time to lose to safeguard the lives of the Iraqi people and Army. President Mubarak called on the Iraqi president to be reasonable, save what could be salvaged, and declare his acceptance of an unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait and restoration of legitimacy. He appealed to him to assess the difficult situation Iraq is going through at this time, to respond objectively and immediately to all Security Council resolutions, and to consider their implementation as a positive stand on his part that does not affect the considerations of personal dignity because the hours of tribulation require men to show the courage that excels over everything.

Concluding his statements, the president said: The difficult conditions the Iraqi people and forces could face require extreme wisdom on the part of the Iraqi leadership for the sake of safeguarding the lives of the soldiers and the innocent sons of the Iraqi people, because this is a trust in the hands of the leadership which it should not abandon regardless of the motives.

Battle Called 'Only Way' To Liberate Kuwait

NC2402160591 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1240 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Bahiy-al-Din Shu'ayn commentary: "An Inevitable Battle in Defense of Justice"]

[Text] What we had feared and warned against has occurred: the collision between the joint troops and the Iraqi troops for the liberation of Kuwait. There would have been absolutely no justification for this war if Saddam had corrected his mistake of invading Kuwait and listened to the advice of those who told him that occupying a fraternal Arab country is an act of aggression and an unlawful conduct that does not rest on justice.

There is no doubt that the events since 2 August comprise the blackest chapter in the Arabs' modern history. No matter how much we try to say or how much we try to analyze the events, what Saddam Husayn embarked on goes beyond common reason and logic. The Gulf crisis started with an unjust aggression against a peaceful Arab people, and all subsequent attempts to justify, interpret, and comment on this action failed to convince anyone of anything other than this bitter truth, which reveals the abominable nature of this crime.

Since the first days of this tragedy, the Egyptian people have made sincere efforts to contain the crisis and avert the danger, but Saddam Husayn persisted in his wrongdoing to the extent of causing a comprehensive rupture in inter-Arab relations and a distortion of the image of the Arabs in general. The warnings by the sincere Arab leaders were not just because Saddam Husayn had committed an act of aggression against Arab fraternity. These warnings reflected a fear of the consequences that will result from the events of the future in terms of the political and material damage to the Arab nation as a whole, including those who supported Saddam's aggression and who tried to find some execuses for him as well as those who stood against the aggression out of belief and sincerity.

The battle that has been in progress since 17 January, in which Iraq was subjected to crushing air attacks by the joint air forces, and the beginning of the ground battle for the liberation of Kuwait which started at dawn today, will end with the greatest amount of destruction, devastation, and murder of innocent Iraqi and Kuwaiti citizens, in addition to the total destruction of the Iraqi military power, to which the Arabs at one time attached high hopes of safeguarding the interests of the Arab nation.

We do not think that any past aggressor has experienced what Saddam is receiving by the world community. The entire world, represented by senior leaders, presidents, and public figures, has appealed to Saddam to regain his senses, pull out his troops from Kuwait, and accept the international community's resolutions. His close friends, chief among them the Soviet Union, asked him to view the crisis with a degree of practicality and to have wisdom, because events are not progressing in his favor and because no one will be able to stand against the entire world. Saddam Husayn, however, dismissed all of this advice and divided the world into believers and infidels, heroes and traitors, and persisted in his attack against whoever stood against this aggression in a way that is unprecedented in politcal dialogue.

In spite of this, in every stage of the crisis the world appealed to Saddam to let wisdom win over desire and to take into account the innocent citizens from his own people. Saddam Husayn, however, took delight in the game and thought himself capable of defeating the whole world, burning it, and triumphing over it.

The battle we had feared and which we had not wanted to be expedited has started. It has started for the liberation of an Arab people who came under the occupation of an Arab regime that has inflicted upon them an unimaginable degree of contempt, humiliation, and displacement and has turned this fraternal Arab country now into an arena for battle, after having put the torch to its oil wealth and having turned the people of Kuwait into hostages and human shields to hide behind from the blows of the joint forces.

This battle, regardless of the feelings of sorrow and sadness it arouses in the souls of the Arabs, became the only way to liberate the people of Kuwait and evacuate the invading Iraqi troops. Regardless of the magnitude of destruction and the number of victims from both sides, the only execuse for this honest battle is that it is in favor of legitimacy and against wrongdoing, on the side of

right against tyranny, and is for all the noble values as opposed to acts of treachery and aggression.

Students Protest Gulf War, Clash With Police

NC2402182691 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1725 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Report by Mustafa Bakri from Cairo]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Thousands of students from Cairo and al-Mansurah Universities today demonstrated and burned the Israeli and U.S. flags, as well as portraits of Saudi King Fahd and the Kuwaiti amir, declaring support for Iraq against the all-out ground attack.

At Cairo University, where more than 5,000 students staged a demonstration, fierce clashes took place between the students and the Central Security Forces. The clashes continued until 1800 today. The Central Security Forces fired tear gas at the students, who tried to take the demonstration to the streets.

A large number of intellectuals staged a sit-in in the headquarters of the Nasirite Party and the [National Progressive Unionist] Grouping Party, where five Egyptian People's Assembly members joined the sit-in.

The Arab Lawyers Union has called for a general strike as of Wednesday to protest the war. Statements were issued by opposition parties denouncing the start of the war by the allies. The Nasirite Party urged the Arab people to strongly confront the attempt to destroy the Arab nation, which is being directed by the war criminals, leaders of the colonialist alliance in the Gulf, as the statement put it.

Coalition Will Leave After Iraqi Pullout

NC2302225191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2205 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Feb (MENA)—Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has stressed that the people of the region should formulate their own security arrangements, because they have the final say on such matters. The people of the region should have their own concept about these arrangements, which must not be imposed on them from the outside, and which must reflect the true situation in the states of the region.

In a statement to reporters at the Political Club of the National Democratic Party this evening, 'Abd-al-Majid said that the allied forces, which have come at the invitation of the Gulf states, will return to their countries immediately after Iraq withdraws from Kuwait. This point has been stressed by the leaders of the allied states, he noted.

'Abd-al-Majid said that Iraq is fully responsible for what is happening now, explaining that Egypt never wanted all these developments to occur.

'Abd-al-Majid stressed that Egypt is committed to all the Arab League resolutions adopted at its emergency meeting held at the beginning of the crisis. He said that Egypt's stand on this crisis is clear, and its support for international legitimacy has been prompt. He stressed that Egypt insists on putting an end to the Iraqi occupation, an immediate and full withdrawal, and the restoration of the legitimate Kuwaiti Government.

Soviet Plan 'Falls Short'; U.S. Policy Backed

NC2302134391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1230 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Feb (MENA)—A responsible source at the Foreign Ministry has stated that in light of the consultations between the Arab Republic of Egypt and the concerned fraternal Arab states and the parties to the coalition supporting the liberation of Kuwait, the Foreign Ministry believes that the Soviet initiative, despite our appreciation for the good intentions that prompted the Soviet Government to submit it, falls short in some of its aspects in meeting the major elements of the UN Security Council resolutions regarding the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Heading these elements is the demand for the Iraqi forces' immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait and the restoration of legitimacy to Kuwait.

The Foreign Ministry added: Hence, we affirm our support for the coalition states' demand included in the statement issued by the United States concerning the Iraqi forces' immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait.

On behalf of Egypt, the source appealed to the Iraqi leadership to respond swiftly to the contents of this statement, abandon its stubbornness and intransigence, and deal conscientiously and responsibly with the dimensions and requirements of the delicate situation being experienced by the Iraqi people and causing them a great deal of suffering and destruction.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Requests Security Council Session

LD2302105891 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0934 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Feb (JANA)—Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the great Al-Fatih revolution, made the following statement to JANA yesterday:

The Arab nation has exercised restraint regarding the bitter Gulf war, because this war is in accordacne with the UN and United Nations Security Council resolutions. Consequently, and vis-a-vis the new phase regarding the withdrawal and other requirements, an emergency session of the United Nations Security Council should take place. The United Nations Security Council is the body that should define the time frame and method of withdrawal under the supervision of the

UN secretary general, that the operation is performed by the United Nations and under international legitimacy, and so that there will not be any violations of the UN charter or abuse of the United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Col. al-Qadhdhafi added that, from today, matters are being shaped according to the desires of the U.S. Administation. This is unjustified from the UN legitmacy point of view, and will yield negative results sooner or later, affecting U.S. relations in particular and Western-Arab relations in general.

Col. al-Qadhdhafi added that this is his contribution to international peace and security and to halt bloodshed. The UN Charter should be respected and should be used during such crucial times to define the method of Iraq's withdrawal and to solve all ambiguities, he said.

At the end of his statement to JANA, Col. al-Qadhdhafi expressed his astonishment as to why matters are carried out in obscurity when the solution can be found through international laws. He said that the United Nations Security Council should determine how a withdrawal can be achieved.

Council Should Decide Withdrawal

LD2302133291 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1055 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Feb (JANA)—Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the great 1 September revolution, stressed the need to go back to the Security Council to deal with the new developments in the Gulf war. He said that this matter, which started in accordance with the Security Council's resolutions, must be dealt with after the new phase by a resolution from the Security Council. In an interview with CNN last night, Col. al-Qadhdhafi added that what is going on now is outside international law, the international community, and the United Nations. He stated that the details of the Iraqi withdrawal should be decided by the Security Council alone "and not by Bush, Saddam Husayn, or any other person." Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi also proposed the convening of an emergency Security Council session that would decide the method of the withdrawal of the Iraqi troops under UN supervision and how the situation in general can be brought under control. He emphasized the need to go back to the international Security Council to determine the way to achieve an immediate and orderly withdrawal without humiliating the Iraqi people or harming the dignity of the Arab nation.

He also indicated that it is extremely dangerous to disregard the dignity of the Arabs, adding that all Arabs rejected the injustice against Iraq, for Iraq has decided to withdraw, which is sufficient. he added that as soon as America stops its fire and its raids, the withdrawal will begin, pointing out that the details of the withdrawal should be decided by the Security Council alone.

Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi stated that, from a legal point of view, the international Security Council should issue a resolution to clarify the way the withdrawal [should take place] and to determine how the situation will be in the next phase, since it was the council that adopted the war resolutions.

Sends Message to Council Members

LD2302133891 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1245 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Feb (JANA)—Brother leader of the revolution Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has sent a message to the heads of the member-states of the UN Security Council and to some nonaligned states, in which he stresses the need to hold an emergency session of the UN Security Council to draw up the arrangements for the withdrawal of the Iraqi troops from Kuwait following Iraq's announcement that it is prepared to implement UN Security Council Resolution 660 in order to preserve the United Nations' credibility and respect the UN Charter and not to leave the matter in the hands of specific sides whose actions could exceed the UN Security Council resolutions.

Bush 'Insult' to Gorbachev Discussed

LD2402135791 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Soviet President Gorbachev announced yesterday that the U.S. Government's rejection of the Soviet peace initiative will not spoil relations between the USSR and the United States and the West in general. Gorbachev's official spokesman said that Gorbachev is not prepared to expose his relations with the West to more danger in order avert a land offensive against Iraq, despite the strong pressures being exerted by opponents of his lenient policy toward the war.

The JANA international political affairs editor has commented on the Soviet peace initiative and the U.S. rejection of this initiative. He says: The great USSR, particularly its leader Gorbachev, has received an international insult without parallel in contemporary history at the hands of the United States of America, which Bush has dealt to Gorbachev's face.

The editor adds: The world is afraid lest this lead to turning the clock back, i.e. to the 1956 ultimatum which the USSR addressed to the Western alliance at the time.

In conclusion, the JANA international political affairs editor affirms that the insults and humiliation which the United States wants to impose on Iraq have also been impressed on the USSR by its rejection of Moscow's views.

Tunisia

Statement Urges End to Offensive Against Iraq

LD2402140391 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Before giving details on the war in the Gulf, we would like to point out that the Tunisian Foreign Ministry has issued a statement which expresses the Tunisian Government's extreme indignation and great disappointment following the announcement that the new peace chances have been forestalled by the determination to escalate the war against Iraq's acceptance of implementing UN Security Council Resolution 660. Tunisia reiterates its full solidarity and deep sympathy with the fraternal Iraqi people over the comprehensive destruction of its human and material resources.

In view of the great deterioration of the situation which might harm the impregnability and the fate of the Arab nation as well as international security and peace, Tunisia urges world public opinion as well as peace-loving people to endeavor to stop the fighting and put an end to this painful tragedy.

Iraqi Response to Soviet Proposals Welcomed

LD2202183991 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Tunisia has expressed its satisfaction at the Iraqi leadership's response to the Soviet initiative and at the positive developments resulting from this initiative. This attitude was expressed by Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya in a statement to TAP, in which he pointed out that Tunisia, which has not spared any effort since the outbreak of the crisis to work sincerely and impartially to contribute to its settlement, welcomes these developments and urges the parties to the conflict in particular, and the United Nations in general, to support these efforts and make them a success. It calls on the Security Council which is meeting presently at the request of the Arab Maghreb Union countries to hasten the establishment of an immediate ceasefire. [passage omitted]

He went on to say that Tunisia hopes this Iraqi acceptance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 660, which calls for the withdrawal from Kuwait within the context of the Soviet peace initiative will lead to the achievement of peace in the region and the opening of a promised possibility for the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the whole region. [passage omitted]

On the possibility of the participation of Tunisia in disengagement [fasl] forces in the Gulf within the context of the planned peace process in accordance with the United Nations Security Council resolution, the foreign minister announced that Tunisia will not spare any effort for the sake of building peace, and it is ready to contribute to these forces under the banner of the United Nations, like its participation in similar operations presently in Congo-Zaire and in Namibia.

President Appoints Advisers, Heads of Companies

LD2102174691 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Feb 91

[Text] We begin the news bulletin with news appointments endorsed today by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. An official spokesman for the president announced that President Ben Ali has decided to make the following appointments:

Salah Bakkari, first adviser to the president

Slahedine Maaoui, first adviser to the president

Abderrazak Kefi, chairman of the Economic and Social Council

Rachid Sabbagh, first president of the Administrative Court

Hedi Bessadok, first president of the Cassation Court

Abdelhafid Hergan, director general of the Tunisia Radio and Television (RTT)

Jamaleddine Chichti, director general of Tunis Air

Tahar Azaiez, director general of the National Railway Company (SNCF).

Abdelhakim Zammal Mokaddemi, director general of the National Oil Board

Nouri Chaouch, director general of the Tunisian Cement Company.

Bahrain

Foreign Ministry Comments on Bush Statement

NC2302200691 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1907 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Manama, 23 Feb (WAKH)—A responsible source at the Bahraini Foreign Ministry has said that the State of Bahrain is following with utmost concern the international initiatives aimed at implementing the Security Council resolutions calling for an unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from the sisterly State of Kuwait, in particular American President George Bush's statement yesterday evening calling for the full implementation of these resolutions.

The source said Bahrain hopes Iraq will respond to the international community's will.

Cabinet Reviews Start of Ground Battle in Gulf

NC2402155791 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1250 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Manama, 24 Feb (WAKH)—The Bahraini cabinet today reviewed the latest developments in the region in light of the start of ground battle at dawn today to liberate the State of Kuwait.

His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, Bahraini prime minister, expressed pride and appreciation about the role played by Bahrain's sons [word indistinct] the Air Defense Forces alongside the forces of the fraternal and friendly countries in performing their noble national duties to liberate the State of Kuwait, alleviate the suffering of the Kuwaiti people, and restore legitimacy under the leadership of Kuwaiti Amir His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah and Heir Apparent His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah.

Yusuf Ahmad al-Shirawi, minister of development and industry and acting minister of state for cabinet affairs, said his highness the Bahraini prime minister expressed confidence that the end of this painful tribulation that has befallen the Arab nation following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait will come soon with God's help and support. His highness declared that the solidarity of all the sons of the region has been one of the strongest factors contributing toward the speed with which the confrontation to stop the Iraqi aggression took place, and to strengthen the pillars of justice and legitimacy. His highness [word indistinct] that the firm determination to join efforts is the basis for our joint action and cooperation to remove the effects of this tribulation, overcome it, resume efforts to realize the ambitions of our people in growth and development, and support security and stability for all the people and states in the region. [passage omitted]

Premier Receives Call From Kuwaiti Counterpart

NC2202201191 Manama WAKH in English 1650 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Manama, Feb 22 (GNA)—Bahraini Prime Minister Shaykh Khalifah Ibn-Salman received a telephone call from Kuwaiti Crown Prince and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah.

During their telephone conversation, they reviewed the latest developments in the Gulf land and the coordination of a joint stance towards current events in the region.

Amir Receives Letter From Iranian President

NC2302112091 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0802 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Manama, 23 Feb (INA)—Bahraini Amir His Highness 'Isa Ibn-Salman Al Khalifah has received a letter from Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani dealing with current developments in the Gulf, bilateral relations, and issues of common concern.

The letter was delivered by Iranian Ambassador Javad Torkabadi when he was received by his highness in Manama today. Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Ibn-Mubarak Al Khalifah also attended the meeting.

Kuwait

Official on Soviet Initiative, Conditions for Peace

Not Officially Notified of Plan

LD2202120691 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1126 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Manamah, 22 Feb (SPA)—Kuwaiti Information Minister Badr Jasim al-Ya'qub said that Kuwait has not yet officially received the contents of the Soviet initiative.

In a statement to AKHBAR AL-KHALIJ, published today in Manamah, he said that any efforts or peace plans that do not conform with the 12 UN resolutions and do not take into consideration Kuwait's legitimate rights will be unacceptable. He pointed out that the international community has agreed that any solution to end the Iraqi occupation of the State of Kuwait must not contravene international, Arab, and Islamic resolutions.

The Kuwaiti minister reviewed the losses that Kuwait and Gulf Cooperation Council countries have suffered as a result of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the consequent developments. He said that these countries will demand compensation from Iraq.

Government Issues Statement

LD2302205991 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1933 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Statement by Shaykh Nasir Muhammad al-Ahmad, Kuwaiti minister of state for foreign affairs, on 23 February; from the "Kuwait Message" program—read by announcer]

[Text] The Kuwaiti Government has followed with interest the Soviet Union's efforts to end the Iraqi occupation of the state of Kuwait peacefully, to spare the State of Kuwait and the region more destruction and ruin from the Iraqi regime's stubborn and arrogant refusal to heed the international will, and to implement the 12 UN Security Council resolutions on the occupation of the State of Kuwait. The Kuwaiti Government, while appreciating the Soviet Union's efforts within this context, announces its absolute support for the statement by His Excellency U.S. President George Bush and the White House statement on the latest Soviet proposals. It affirms simultaneously that there is no way to settle this crisis, caused by the Iraqi occupation of the State of Kuwait, except through full implementation of all the relevant Security Council resolutions which have the absolute and full support of the international community, particularly of the Security Council member states.

Further on Comments

LD2302123891 London KUNA in Arabic 1154 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Text] al-Ta'if, 23 Feb (KUNA)—The state of Kuwait has voiced its strong support for the ultimatum given by the U.S. President Bush for the start of the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait. It has also expressed its gratitude for the efforts and endeavors of the Soviet Union aimed at putting an end to the occupation in this regard.

Kuwait has stressed that there is no way of solving the crisis resulting from the Iraqi occupation of the State of Kuwait other than through the full implementation of the UN Security Council [UNSC] resolutions regarding this issue.

This statement, made by Shaykh Nasir Muhammad al-Ahmad, Kuwaiti minister of state for foreign affairs, was circulated here today.

Shaykh Nasir Muhammad al-Ahmad stated that the Kuwaiti Government has followed the efforts that have been deployed by the Soviet Union to put an end to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait peacefully, which would spare Kuwait and the region further destruction caused by the arrogant refusal of the Iraqi regime to respect the international will and implement the twelve UNSC resolutions regarding the occupation of Kuwait.

He added that, while the Kuwaiti Government appreciates the efforts of the Soviet Union in this regard, it announces its absolute support for the statement of U.S. President Bush and the White House statement vis-a-vis the recent Soviet proposals. At the same time, the Kuwaiti Government stresses that there is no way to settle the crisis caused by the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait other than through the full implementation of all UNSC resolutions pertaining to this matter, which have enjoyed full and absolute backing by the international community, particularly the UNSC permanent member states.

Government Forms Emergency Reconstruction Plan

LD2202145591 London KUNA in Arabic 1309 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpts] al-Ta'if, 22 Feb (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti Government today announced that it has drawn up a comprehensive emergency plan, costing 126 million dollars, to provide essential services over the first three months of the liberation of Kuwait for the thousands of citizens who are currently in Kuwait.

The general coordinator of the working party for the emergency plan and reconstruction, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Fahd al-Hassawi, said that the plan, which would take from three to four months to implement after the return of the legitimate government to Kuwait, was based on a number of assumptions—such as that the level of essential services would be low after the evacuation of the invading Iraqi forces.

In an interview with KUNA, al-Hassawi added that a subsequent, reconstruction phase, costing between $40 and 50 billion, would be implemented after the exit of the invading forces, God willing; it would take between two to seven years depending on the extent of the damages that have been inflicted as a result of the Iraqi regime's practices.

Al-Hassawi said that efforts during the emergency period would be focused on the provision of services for citizens inside and for the welcoming of citizens from abroad after preparing acceptable living conditions. He pointed out that precedence in awarding contracts and providing essential services would be given to the supreme interest, and then to sisterly and friendly countries that have stood by Kuwait during the painful crisis it has been going through.

Al-Hassawi said that the government would finance the cost of the emergency and reconstruction phase through a comprehensive financing plan, which would conform with the forthcoming economic conditions. It should be mentioned that the United Nations has imposed on Iraq the condition that it pay reparations to Kuwait covering the cost of repairing the destruction that has resulted from the invasion.

The Kuwaiti official said the emergency plan that was drawn up to serve one 1.2 million people, after the return of citizens from abroad, includes the provision of water and food through contracts with food merchants in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other friendly countries, to provide quantities of basic food items during the emergency phase and later, and that arrangements for transporting these items to Kuwait had been made. [passage omitted]

He said that contracts would be signed in the next few weeks with a number of Saudi companies, specializing in the field of cleanup, to remove the wreckage and rubble caused by the Iraqi invasion and provide normal cleaning services.

Minister Notes Continued Support for Palestinians

LD2102175691 Bern International Service in English 1530 GMT 21 Feb 91

[Text] A Kuwaiti cabinet minister in exile has indicated that his country will continue to support the Palestinian cause. The planning minister of Iraqi-occupied Kuwait, Sulayman Mutawwa, told the French-language Swiss newspaper LA SUISSE that Kuwait had always sided with the Palestinians in their dispute with Israel and intended to pursue the same policy in the future. However, Mr. Mutawwa said the Palestinian leadership, with its declared support for Iraq, had maneuvered themselves into political wilderness. He said this was a problem the Palestinians would have to resolve for themselves.

Amir Al-Sabah Delivers Speech on National Day

LD2402204891 London KUNA in Arabic 1941 GMT 24 Feb 91

["Amir's Speech on the Occasion of National Day"—KUNA headline; formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpts] al-Ta'if, 24 Feb (KUNA)—[passage omitted] Brothers and sisters, sons and daughters of dear Kuwait: On this day every year we welcome and celebrate our national day, and now we are doing just that while the liberation battle is blazing to defeat the usurping aggressor and to restore right. With hearts full of belief in Almighty God, we pray for a speedy victory and a defeat for the unjust aggressor and for the triumphant return of Kuwaitis to their Kuwait. [passage omitted]

From the blazing fires of the war and its pains, the voice of Kuwait is raised today, reaffirming that it will remain as it always was: Arab in face and heart; guided by the code of God; striving for peace, love, and international understanding; and an oasis of safety harboring no ill-will toward anyone. [passage omitted]

Brothers and sisters, we are about to embark on a new decisive phase that requires us go be united in our word. Let us be armed with true belief, being protected by the care of God and his assistance, adopting the recommendations of the Kuwaiti popular conference which was held in October last year as a national charter which will govern our forthcoming march, God willing. The Kuwait of tomorrow is not the Kuwait of yesterday in view of the volume and type of heavy duties we face. [passage omitted]

In conclusion, I would like to convey in the name of the Kuwaiti people and in my own name profound thanks and gratitude to the various branches of the coalition armed forces for what they have carried out and are carrying out in the operations to liberate Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Paper Suggests Saddam's 'Successor' Can Defy Him

PM2202115791 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 19 Feb 91 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Did You Know"]

[Text] Did you know that Saddam Husayn no longer has the decisive word within the so-called "Revolution Command Council" and the authority in general and that the others, first and foremost the successor, Sa'dun Hammadi, now feel entitled to argue with the "absolute master" and even reject his decisions?

Rejects 'Guarantees' for Saddam

PM2202125991 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 20 Feb 91 p 1

[Muhammad al-Rumayhi article: "Guarantees For Our Protection, Not Saddam's"]

[Text] Saddam Husayn has no right to any guarantees for his personal protection or the protection of his regime. The international community has no right to give Saddam Husayn such guarantees.

As Heir Apparent Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah pointed out, nobody would feel safe with Saddam Husayn at the head of the Iraqi regime.

Any peaceful solution or diplomatic initiative that guaranteed Saddam Husayn's continuation at the peak of power in Iraq, even if he did withdraw from Kuwait, would only mean that the region had won the war but not the peace.

Having succeeded in destroying both Kuwait and Iraq and having managed to dig mass graves in record time for hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, Iranians, Kuwaitis, and Lebanese, the head of the Iraqi regime is asking for international-legal authority to guarantee his own safety and to leave him in power in Baghdad, in his luxury palaces built with Iraqi and Arab blood, without reckoning or punishment. That would be a precedent that the victims would not forgive or accept, not because of a desire for vengeance—although there is raging anger in all our hearts—and not only because that midget tyrant Saddam Husayn gambled the future of not only Iraq but

all the Arabs, but because such a precedent would enable him to resort again to invasion, treachery, and aggression with more ferocity and black hatred. He would extend his troublesome terrorist horns throughout the world. Was that not exactly what he did when, after coming out of the war with his Muslim neighbor Iran and, although wounded, he pounced on Kuwait, his fraternal and peaceful Arab neighbor, causing "an unprecedented Arab catastrophe in our contemporary history," as was said by King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques?

We, Saddam Husayn's victims, are all for Iraq's territorial integrity and in favor of guarantees for the protection of the Iraqi people: but protection against what? Did the Islamic Republic of Iran invade Iraq and occupy the Shatt al-'Arab; or did Kuwait, the Kuwaiti people, and the Kuwaiti Government invade Iraq, declare war, and resort to the sword instead of dialogue?

The peoples of Iraq, Kuwait, the fraternal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the friendly Islamic Republic of Iran certainly need guarantees for their own protection from the madness and trouble of Saddam Husayn and his regime, as well as from the massive machine of terror and repression with which Saddam Husayn tightens his grip on the Iraqi people and on fraternal and friendly peoples both near and far. If the international community, the legitimate authority, decided to give Saddam Husayn and his regime guarantees for their survival, that would definitely mean that it had won the war but not the peace.

The fact that the United Arab Emirates, under the historic leadership of Shaykh Zayid, has joined the ongoing war in the Gulf, with the air force of that young state, with its genuine Arab and Muslim identity, bombing the positions of the criminal occupation forces in Kuwait, is new evidence that Saddam Husayn is above all the enemy of the Arabs and Muslims. We Arabs and Muslims need international guarantees for the downfall of Saddam Husayn and his criminal regime and for the protection of our children and our future. We are more worthy of protection than he.

Allied Patrols Reportedly Operating in Kuwait

LD2302142891 London KUNA in Arabic 1409 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Riyadh, 23 Feb (KUNA)—An informed allied military source says that the allied forces are carrying out surveillance patrols inside Kuwait.

The source told KUNA here today: "The allied forces have crossed the security strip, opening crossing points along the Saudi borders with Iraq and Kuwait. The source added that these crossing points "have been opened for the forces to enter." The source said the the forces are now crossing the borders, while other forces are standing near the fences.

Oman

Foreign Ministry Comments on Bush's Statement

NC2302183891 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1740 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Muscat, 23 Feb (WAKH)—A spokesman for the Omani Foreign Ministry said today the Sultanate of Oman views President George Bush's statement yesterday evening, Friday, as an opprtunity for the Iraqi forces to withdraw from Kuwait to avert further victims and material losses, as well as for the implementation of the Security Council resolutions passed in this respect since the start of the crisis. The Sultanate of Oman also believes that this will pave the way for security and stability in the Gulf region.

Qatar

Source Voices 'Absolute Solidarity' With Bush

NC2302141391 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1248 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Doha, 23 Feb (WAKH)—The State of Qatar has expressed appreciation for and great interest in the Soviet efforts, as well as its absolute solidarity with the stand adopted by U.S. President George Bush. This came in a statement issued by a responsible source at the Qatari Foreign Ministry and reported by the QATARI NEWS AGENCY today.

The source explained that the State of Qatar followed with great appreciation and interest the recent Soviet diplomatic efforts which resulted in an official Soviet statement on Iraq's endorsement of the proposals included in the Soviet initiative.

At the same time, the State of Qatar expresses its appreciation for the U.S. stands, especially President George Bush's declaration about the necessity of complete implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions calling for Iraq's compliance with the international community's demand for its complete and unconditional withdrawal from the State of Kuwait and the restoration of legitimate authority there under His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah.

The source said that Qatar believes that the stands declared by the Soviet Union and the United States do not (?contradict) their stated positions stressing the need to implement the UN Security Council resolutions regarding an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and the restoration of the legitimate Kuwaiti authority.

Saudi Arabia

Government Statement on Soviet, U.S. Positions

LD2202224791 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2215 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Riyadh, 22 Feb—The government of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, issued the following statement tonight:

The Government of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom has followed with utmost interest the Soviet leadership's announcement of Iraq's acceptance of its latest proposals.

After taking cognizance of the statement made by His Excellency U.S. President George Bush following his official receipt of the Soviet proposal, and the statement made this evening, Friday, 22 February 1991, by the U.S. White House spokesman, the Government of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom wishes to affirm that its views are in agreement with their contents on the ground that both call for Iraq's submission to the international community's will while guaranteeing full implementation of all United Nations Security Council resolutions, adherence to which has been and continues to be a constant and essential requisite on which the international community insists.

Tashkent Muslim Leader Sends Support Message

LD2102185391 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 21 Feb 91

[Excerpt] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, may God protect him, has received the following message from Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf, chairman of the Muslim Board in Tashkent, in the Soviet Union:

On behalf of all Muslims in Central Asia and Kazakhstan and in my own name, I would like to reaffirm to you that we are all with you in these difficult days and that we share with you all the difficulties. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is sacred to all Muslims of the world and the aggression against it is a great sin before God and before the Muslim peoples.

We pray to God almighty to help you and protect you and we also pray to him to protect the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is dear to every Muslim in the world and to help us all succeed in serving Islam and the Muslims. [passage omitted]

Press Comments on Peace Proposals for Gulf War

LD2302121591 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0750 GMT 23 Feb 91

[From the Press Review]

[Excerpts] Newspaper editorials consider the current military operations in the region aimed at liberating Kuwait from the Iraqi aggressor. They also deal with the current initiatives to end the Iraqi occupation through peaceful means.

AL-JAZIRAH states that the present proposed initiatives to end the Iraqi occupation of the State of Kuwait were put by the world to Saddam Husayn at the start of his sinful occupation of Kuwait on 2 August. He rejected them all with unprecedented arrogance, obstinacy, and scorn.

Moreover, he rejected with disdain all twelve UN Security Council [UNSC] resolutions, which all call for a peaceful withdrawal from Kuwait to avoid a war in the region.

The paper adds that "From his trench, Saddam Husayn is now waving the UNSC resolutions, which he previously turned down with contempt, and he is accusing the international community of not abiding by these resolutions and of trying to destroy Iraq".

The paper adds: "Was not Saddam, who is making so much noise now and calling for a cease-fire, the one who ordered his troops to occupy Kuwait? Was he not the one who rejected the initiatives and mediations which have not stopped for one moment since the start of his aggression against Kuwait, to save peace, and was he not the one who closed all doors in the face of peace opportunities, until he forced the world to resort to military force to liberate Kuwait?"

The paper stresses that there is no way out for the Baghdad regime to see military operations halted, other than full surrender, withdrawal from Kuwait, and bearing the consequences of his irresponsible acts".

AL-RIYADH emphasizes that the war to liberate Kuwait is for the sake of correcting an abnormal situation which is incompatible with the foundations of international detente.

The paper stresses that any initiative should be based on the UN resolutions principle, because this is the agreed basis that cannot be meddled with.

It says: "Any initiative will remain far from fullfilling its aims if it is not committed to these resolutions. This is what makes the current situation unacceptable as long as Iraq does not announce its commitment to accept the resolutions and the conditions as defined by these resolutions".

The paper states that the bet of Baghdad's ruler is to create a crack in the back of the united alliance that stands against its aggression, and terrorize it by playing on contradictions".

The paper adds: "What is important now is that all countries interested in peace should act within the spirit of these resolutions, because Iraq alone should be responsible for the perils of war, and consequently its authority should not be rewarded for having violated

international charters, and its acts should not be justified by an initiative that does not meet what is required of it".

The AL-BILAD editorial says that the initiatives and settlements that try to have things both ways cannot form the basis for a peaceful, just, and permanent solution in the Arab Gulf region, because they will lead to selling out peace in return for rewarding the aggressor.

The paper indicates that what is required is not only the restoration of the situation in the region to its pre-2 August state, but also that the Iraqi regime should bear the outcome of its aggression and should be made answerable for the human and material damage it has caused in the region.

The paper emphasizes that any initiative or political settlement should be based on the UNSC resolutions. It should clearly state the principle of the immediate and total withdrawal, which should not be linked to any conditions, not even proposals, and should stress the implementation of all UNSC resolutions.

The paper stresses that it is in the interest of all countries that the international will should triumph, that they should not break away from the international consensus, and they should realize that any leniency in this connection, even if it based on good intentions, does not serve the interest of the world nor that of the international community.

AL-BILAD concludes by saying: "Let everybody know that the conditions and feeble justifications being reiterated by the Iraqi aggressor are mere maneuvers aimed at winning time". [passage omitted]

AL-MADINAH AL-MUNAWWARAH says that "Saddam Husayn has lost the trust of the whole world regarding any promise or undertaking that he may make".

It adds that the world, at the forefront Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, and other countries, has been calling on Iraq to exercise logic, farsightedness, and repent its mortal sin. Iraq, however, showed contempt, became arrogant, set fire into its army and equipment, and subjected Iraq and the people of Iraq to boycott, deprivation, and destruction.

The paper indicates that Saddam Husayn has no respect for the Iraqi people, as he has led them to destruction, death, and annihilation. It stresses that today Saddam is seen in the eyes of the world to be a war criminal. He should be overthrown and tried for all his crimes and the crimes of torture, killing, and annihilation which he inflicts on the Iraqi people and the annihilation of the Kuwaiti people. He should also be tried for the crime of plunder, pillage, rape, environmental pollution, squandering of resources, arming the unemployed, and building a terrorist force with the aim of spreading chaos and terror among safe people.

AL-MASA'IYAH editorial says that, following the last warning issued yesterday by U.S. President Bush, Iraq has no more room to maneuver.

The paper warns that giving Saddam Husayn more time to sort out his affairs and withdraw his troops from Kuwait will only lead to more maneuvers by Saddam. The paper indicates that the Iraqi regime, which occupied Kuwait, wants to leave it after having destroyed it completely, and yet not to be made to pay reparations.

AL-MASA'IYAH stresses that Iraq should leave Kuwait for its people. It should admit its failure and big mistakes. It should spare the world and the region more destruction.

AL-YAWM said that the state of the Iraqi regime reflects the deep impass of the Iraqi leadership following the defeat of Saddam's army and its inability to continue fighting.

The editorial indicates that this also reflects the deadlock felt by those who are supporting Saddam, and how they have become victims after having lost their senses, turned a blind eye on the errors of the Iraqi regime, were carried away behind his false propaganda, and supported his aggression.

The paper concludes: "Saddam is like any dictator whose only interest is to protect his life and preserve power irrespective of the losses of the others".

King Fahd Phoned By Egypt's Mubarak on Gulf

Views 'Identical'

LD2202144891 Riyadh SPA in English 1218 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Riyadh, Feb 22 (SPA)—Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-'al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud has received a telephone call from Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak.

During their telephone talks, King Fahd and President Mubarak reviewed new developments at Arab and international levels and exchanged views on events in the Arab Gulf region. Views have been identical on all issues raised during the talks.

Discuss Gulf War 24 Feb

LD2402185791 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, today received a telephone call from his brother His Excellency President Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, within the framework of their following of the current events in the Arab Gulf region in the light of the developments resulting from the start of the Kuwait liberation operations, according to the plans of the desert

Storm campaign, and in implementing the Arab, Islamic, and international resolutions.

Crown Prince Talks With Kuwaiti Heir Apparent

LD2402115791 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, crown prince, deputy prime minister and commander of the national guard, received today a telephone call from his brother His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti heir apparent. SPA has learned that they reviewed the current developments in the Arab Gulf area following the joint forces' launch of their ground war which is aimed, with Allah's help, at liberating fraternal Kuwait in accordance with the plan drawn by the Desert Storm operation. This will, God willing, be successful.

Editorial Views Iraqi Withdrawal Announcement

PM2002164691 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 Feb 91 p 9

[Editorial: "New Chapter By Maker of Tragedy"]

[Text] Was it necessary for all that has happened to happen for Iraq to announce its willingness to withdraw from Kuwait and comply with UN Resolution 660? Was it necessary to push Iraq and the region into that bloody and destructive adventure in order to reach the substance of the Iraqi Revolution Command Council's statement yesterday? Regardless of the tragic and aggressive nature of that adventure, the statement issued in Baghdad still deserves attention.

Iraq's announcement of its willingness to withdraw from Kuwait simply means that the Iraqi leadership does not regard Kuwait as part of Iraq's territory, and that all that was said about the "new governorate" and the "return of the branch to the root" was merely an attempt to confuse. The willingness to withdraw destroys any justification for Iraq's adventure, even in the eyes of those who have sought to justify the Iraqi action.

There remains the question of timing, which assumes special importance in Iraqi propaganda calculations. The Iraqi step followed the incident in which the Baghdad shelter—which Washington said was used for military purposes—was bombed. It also followed the mission of Soviet envoy Yevgeniy Primakov, who spoke of a "glimmer of hope." The step also preceded tomorrow's visit to Moscow by Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz, at a time when a kind of feverish race has started between Moscow's attempts to achieve a diplomatic breakthrough and the decision for the ground battle, which several sources have said is imminent.

Iraq's attempt to accompany its announcement of its willingness to withdraw with conditions actually represents a continuation of the previous linkage attempt, though it is clear that Baghdad is no longer in a position to impose conditions. Perhaps these conditions were addressed principally to those who applauded the Iraqi aggression, in an attempt to sell them more false hopes to promote among their people, parties, and organizations.

Perhaps the aim of this innovation in Iraq's position—namely, the announcement of its definite willingness to withdraw from Kuwait—is to split the international front opposed to the invasion so as to prevent the launching of the land offensive and drive the crisis toward negotiations.

It really is a tragedy for one single person to interfere with the destiny of a people and a state, drive them to great destruction, and threaten the region's stability for the sake of insincere slogans whereby he merely wants to cover his adventure.

Probably the best proof of the tragedy is that the Iraqis fired shots in the air to celebrate the announcement of the willingness to withdraw, whereas they received the annexation decision with speechless outrage.

Radio Calls on Iraqis To Lay Down Arms

LD2402114191 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1110 GMT 24 Feb 91

["Appeal to Iraqi Soldiers"]

[Text] O helpless Iraqi fighter, fighting a war which is not yours and a dishonorable battle. You are giving your blood and all your possessions, and you are leaving your family without any justification for these sacrifices.

O helpless Iraqi fighter, we know that you are driven by a harsh regime into a war in which you do not believe. You have just finished a war in which you also did not believe.

We know the extent of the terrible psychological conflict which you suffer, and we know that your battle is not in this place, but there, where the real enemies are. We know that your life is worthless to Saddam, and we know that your future and family do not interest Saddam at all, as all Iraq does not interest him. We know that you are a victim, just like the millions of victims. You have been put in these camps where death is opening its mouth to you, where there is no food and no one cares about you. All these things are for no convincing reason.

O helpless Iraqi fighter, be like your comrades, who have laid down their arms and have come forward to their brothers—the Saudi, Arab, and Islamic forces—as guests. With them you will find big hearts and kind hands which will make you feel welcome. We feel sorry for what you suffer.

The honorable prophet was truthful when he said: Not one of you will become a believer until his wishes agree with what I brought you. Yes, it is not for Saddam Husayn, and not for the interest of those leaders hiding in Baghdad, but it is for the benefit of Iraq, which is more important than all leaders.

Reportage on War Developments, Ground Offensive

Communiques Summarize Operations

LD2202194591 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Military Communique no. 36 issued by the Joint Forces and Theater of Operations Command, read by Joint Forces spokesman Colonel Ahmad al-Rubay'an in Riyadh on 22 February—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate. If God grants you his support, then nobody can vanquish you.

Military Communique No. 36, issued by the Command of the Joint Forces and Theater of Operations, Riyadh, Saudi Arabian Kingdom, on the 37th day of the Desert Storm operation 22 February 1991.

We have pleasure in informing you briefly of the events of the past 24 hours, as follows:

A unit of the Saudi Ground Forces yesterday carried out reconnaissance inside the borders of the aggressor, resulting in the clearing of a 60-meter wide gap in one of the minefields planted by the aggressor and the disabling of 75 mines, which were removed to the unit's position inside the Kingdom.

At 1800 yesterday, a unit of the Saudi Ground Forces, supported by helicopters of the U.S. Marines, engaged a number of elements of the aggressor forces. The engagement resulted in the destruction of two tanks and the disablement of a recoiless field gun belonging to the aggressor. Thanks be to God, our forces suffered no losses.

At 2100 last night, the aggressor fired a Scud missile in the direction of Hafr al-Batin area. The missile fell away from the residential area, thus causing no losses.

At about 0231, at dawn today, the aggressor fired a Scud missile in the direction of Dhahran or the State of Bahrain. The missile was intercepted and destroyed in the air. It fell in the Arab Gulf waters. Thanks be to God, it thus caused no losses.

Five enemy soldiers surrendered the day before yesterday to one of the Saudi Frontier posts.

The Joint Forces are still continuing their air sorties against the Republican Guards, the communications centers, the supply routes and missile launchers. In the past 24 hours they carried out over 2,700 sorties, of which 146 sorties were carried out by our Air Forces.

Thus the total number of sorties carried out by the Joint Forces since the start of the Desert Storm operation is over 91,000 sorties, of which our Air Force carried out over 5,900 sorties; the Bahraini Air Force 238 sorties; the Qatari Air Force 51 sorties, the Kuwaiti Air Force 636 sorties, and the United Arab Emirates Air Force 26 sorties.

At 1330 yesterday, a battalion of the U.S. Marines engaged an enemy force. The engagement resulted in the destruction of a tank and four mechanized vehicles and the capture of 70 of the enemy forces' prisoners. The losses of the U.S. Marines were two vehicles destroyed.

A unit of one of the U.S. Army divisions penetrated into the borders of the assailant by air and destroyed a number of fortified positions, captured 14 soldiers, and seized important military documents. Another unit of the U.S. Army carried out an air reconnaissance mission into the assailant's territory and destroyed a microwave antenna and damaged a Land Rover vehicle. There were no losses in the ranks of the U.S. Army troops.

At exactly 1000 today a U.S. Marine unit clashed with one of the assailant divisions and, as a result, four tanks were destroyed and 100 soldiers were taken prisoner. Thus the total number of the prisoners taken by U.S. troops in the past 24 hours has gone up to 188 soldiers.

The Saudi Royal Navy, the U.S. Navy, and the British Royal Navy continue their minesweeping operations in the northern part of the Arabian Gulf, where 15 mines were discovered in the past 24 hours; 10 of these mines were detonated by the British Royal Navy; two were detonated by the U.S. Navy; two were picked up for analysis by the U.S. Navy, and the Saudi Royal Navy is dealing with one mine to detonate it. French Gazelle helicopters carried out air reconnaissance missions across the assailant's borders. When the helicopters came under fire from light weapons they returned the fire, destroying one vehicle and a command building held by the assailant.

British artillery units and two U.S. units carried out an artillery raid with rocket launchers against a command and control center and artillery positions held by the assailant. So far we have no reports on the damages caused.

Battlefield Preparations Reviewed

LD2302193391 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Military Communique No. 37 issued by the Joint Forces and Theater of Operations Command, read by Joint Forces spokesman Colonel Ahmad al-Rubay'an in Riyadh on 23 February—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God; God grants victory to he who backs His cause. God is most powerful and most magnificent.

Military Communique No. 37, issued by the Joint Forces and Theater of Operations Command, in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for the 38th day of the Operation Desert Storm, 9 Sha'ban 1411 AH, corresponding to 23 February. We thank you for your participation in this meeting, and we are pleased to summarize for you the events of the last 24 hours:

At 0500, at dawn today, the aggressor launched a Scud missile toward the eastern region of the Kingdom. It fell in an uninhabited desert region.

In continuation of the operations for preparing the battlefield, a unit of our land forces engaged in an artillery bombardment, supported by close-support aircraft, against Iraqi targets. There is no information available on the results of this operation. The number of prisoners in the hands of the command of the Joint Forces has reached 1,390 soldiers, including 99 officers of various ranks. This is in addition to the military refugees already announced.

The total sorties carried out by the Joint Forces during the last 24 hours reached 2,900, of which our Air Force carried out 152 against some positions of the Republican Guard inside Kuwait, logistics and supply positions, missile launchers, military airports, some main roads, and railway lines used for military purposes. Thus, the total sorties carried out by the Joint Forces since the start of the Operation Desert Storm is more than 94,000, of which our Air Force's share is more than 6,100.

During the last 24 hours, seven sea mines were detected, of which five were destroyed: one by the Royal Saudi Navy, two by the British Royal Navy, and two by the U.S. Navy. Two are still being dealt with.

Yesterday, two groups of the Egyptian forces crossed the aggressor's border in a reconnaissance operation and returned safely to their bases after obtaining the information they were seeking. This was accomplished without any resistance on the part of the aggressor's forces.

Yesterday, during two air reconnaissance operations, elements of an American unit clashed with the aggressor's forces. The result was the destruction of two tanks, one vehicle, two missile launchers, and two radars. In addition, at 0155 today, a reconnaissance patrol of American infantry clashed with an Iraqi force. This led to the destruction of a number of anti-aircraft guns and two vehicles, and additional explosions were seen in the position.

At 2300 yesterday, an American artillery unit, supported by helicopters, attacked an anti-aircraft gun position. This led to the destruction of two tanks and one vehicle. Last night, aircraft of the allied forces attacked mobile Scud launchers and transporters: eight of the launchers were destroyed, together with four Scud missiles.

Thus, we finish our summary for today.

No 38 Suspends Further Communiques

LD2402123491 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Military Communique No. 38 issued by the Joint Forces and Theater of Operations Command, read by Joint Forces spokesman Colonel Ahmad al-Rubay'an in Riyadh on 24 February—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate: May God grant victory soon.

Military Communique No. 38 issued by the Joint Forces and Theater of Operations Command in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia for the 39th day of Operation Desert Storm, 24 February 1991.

The land operations to liberate the fraternal State of Kuwait commenced at dawn today.

In order to guarantee the security of the operations, His Royal Highness the Commander of the Joint Forces and Theater of Operations, Staff Lieutenant General Khalid Bin-Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, issued his orders, with the agreement of the commands of the fraternal and friendly countries, to stop issuing military communiques and holding news conferences until further notice.

The command of the joint forces would like to reassure the brother citizens and residents that Operation Desert Storm is progressing as planned with complete success. May God guide us all.

Smoke Covers Kuwait

NC2302164691 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1252 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 Feb (WAKH)—A responsible source in the United Arab Emirates [UAE] has stated that the crime committed by the Iraqi regime of burning a large number of Kuwaiti oil wells has lead to huge fires and a dark black cloud billowing over Kuwait. It is expected that the winds will push this cloud in the direction of the UAE.

The source said the authorities in the UAE affirm to all that this black smoke and the bad smells that might come with it are a passing thing and have no effect on the general health. It is merely another piece of evidence of the crimes committed by the Iraqi regime against humanity and the environment.

Cloud Reportedly Spreading

LD2402093791 Tehran IRNA in English 0800 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Khark Island, Bushehr Prov., Feb. 24 IRNA—The sky over the Persian Gulf has almost been covered by clouds of thick black smoke since Saturday [23 February] afternoon.

The cloud first appeared in an area opposite this Persian Gulf island over the Kuwaiti island and later spread to larger areas particularly over the Khark island.

The cloud, caused by air raids on Kuwaiti and Iraqi oil and economic installations by the U.S.-led allied forces, is still hanging over the area and seems to be spreading to other areas in southern parts of the country.

Scud Missile Shot Down

LD2402022591 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 0205 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] A military spokesman in the Command of Joint Forces and Theater of Operations announced that at 0140 GMT this morning, Sunday, 24 February 1991, the Iraqi aggressor fired a Scud missile toward the city of Riyadh. Our defensive means intercepted it and were able to blow it up in mid-air with [word indistinct] missiles.

No Casualties Reported

LD2402032191 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0250 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 24 Feb, (SPA)—[passage omitted]

A responsible source at the Interior Ministry pointed out that the debris of the missile, after it was blown up, fell on an unoccupied school which caused some damage. No casualties ensued, thanks be to God.

Faylakah Island Liberated

LD2402030491 London KUNA in Arabic 0255 GMT 24 Feb 91

[From KUNA correspondent; formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Text] Dharan, 24 Feb, (KUNA)—An informed source from the Joint Forces affirmed here the liberation of the Kuwaiti Jazirat Faylakah [Faylakah Island] following the destruction of Iraqi tanks occupying it.

'Amphibious Landing' Planned

LD2402102991 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The joint forces penetrated more than 25 miles into Kuwait today. Reports from the field of operations in the Gulf point out that the special forces of the joint forces are currently carrying out a number of operations to secure oil wells and other vital installations inside liberated Kuwait. The same reports assert that those forces have consolidated their positions on the Kuwaiti island of Faylakah, which was recapturd at dawn today, preparing it to be used by the U.S. Marines for amphibious landing on the shores of the State of Kuwait.

Allied Ground Attacks Begin 24 Feb

LD2402021791 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 0200 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The Joint Forces have intensified their ground attacks in the last few hours on Iraqi positions on the Kuwaiti border. Responsible sources in the Joint Forces said that some forces were able to cross the Kuwaiti border and infiltrate in areas near the city of al-Wafrah.

IRNA Reports

LD2402055291 Tehran IRNA in English 0540 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Excerpt] London, Feb, 24, IRNA—A full allied ground offensive against the Iraqi forces in Kuwait began early Sunday Morning Baghdad time, after Iraq Failed to withdraw from the emirate by the U.S.-imposed deadline, 17:00 hours GMT.

The transition from aerial bombardment to land attacks, including artillery shelling, effectively began more than a week ago with brief incursions into Kuwait by the allied forces.

The aerial bombardment, which began on January 17 with massive raids on Baghdad, has continued relentlessly since then and is expected to go on while the land war rages. The latest American estimates put the number of weapons dropped on Iraq and Kuwait by the allied bombers at around 150,000. And this amounts to some 55 million kilograms of explosives.

Both sides have accused the other of breaches of human rights. The allies have condemned Iraq's "ill-treatment" of prisoners of war, and bombardment of Saudi and Israeli civilian targets. The Iraqis accused the allies of killing thousands of civilians in Iraq. On Saturday the Americans admitted that around 45 percent of bombs dropped had missed their targets.

As the war stepped up, Iraqi forces have destroyed around 180 oil wells and leaked oil into the Persian Gulf, gravely affecting the environment. The American forces have been criticized by the Red Cross for having violated the Geneva Convention by carpet bombing with B-52 bombers, and through their use of deadly Fuel-Air bombs and napalms. [passage omitted]

Troop Movement Noted

NC2402071591 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0600 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Riyadh, 24 Feb (WAKH)—Reports from the theater of operations in Kuwait and on the Iraqi borders say that French units entered the Iraqi territories early this morning and continue to advance. The reports say that the alliance forces command has gained the element of surprise by starting the offensive and by waging several (?attacks). Actually, the period of preparation for this type of operation has been drastically shortened.

According to Kuwaiti military sources in Hafar al-Batin, Kuwaiti units today entered the (Msalmi) area in the direction of al-Jahrah city. Fighting is currently taking place on the approaches to al-Jahrah, which is 80 km from the Saudi northern borders. News reports also mention that the Egyptian troops have entered Kuwaiti territory along the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border.

AFP Reports No Resistance

NC2402110191 Paris AFP in English 1056 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] IN THE IRAQI DESERT, Feb 24 (AFP) [dateline as received]—French troops entered Iraq overnight without meeting any resistance, French officers told correspondents at the scene Sunday.

The journalists were escorting the French Army at an Iraqi border fort that had apparently been abandoned for days. The French troops encountered no resistance and suffered no casualties, the officers said.

Kuwaiti Troops Reach Al-Jahrah

LD2402081891 London KUNA in Arabic 0745 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Text] Riyadh, 24 Feb (KUNA)—Authoritative military sources told KUNA here today that the Al-Shahid Brigade [Martyr Brigade] has reached the outskirts of the Kuwait city of al-Jahrah.

'Pincer Operation' Described

LD2402083391 London KUNA in Arabic 0735 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Text] Al-Dhahran, 24 Feb (KUNA)—A responsible military source said that the current war for the liberation of Kuwait might not last more than 36 hours. He pointed out that thousands of Iraqi soldiers are surrendering. The source told KUNA that the Republican Guard forces stationed in northern Kuwait are nearly "routed," pointing out that the coalition forces have relied completely on the air force during the land attack, using American Apache and French Gazelle helicopters.

The source pointed out that the coalition forces, with the participation of some of the forces of the Kuwaiti Army, were able to go 40 km inside Kuwait during the first hours of the attack from northern Saudi Arabia. At the same time, there was a huge amphibious landing operation on the Kuwaiti shore. The source said that the coalition forces are concentrating parallel to Basra, to the north of Kuwait, in an operation described as being aimed at "isolating Kuwait from Iraq."

He stressed that the march of the international coalition forces toward the city of Kuwait is continuing along three fronts with the participation of land, sea, and air forces. KUNA has obtained preliminary reports that say that the ground attack began by air force squadrons flying toward Kuwait, followed by huge air transporters and U.S. and Arab forces marching toward Kuwait from the south and west while the U.S. Marines landed from the east.

The reports confirm that the attack is continuing along five different axes within the context of an operation aimed at distracting the attention of the Iraqi forces. This is known in military strategy dictionaries as "pincer operation" aimed at encircling the enemy forces and isolating them completely in order to force their surrender and limit the losses in lives and materials on both sides.

AFP Summarizes Fighting

NC2402100991 Paris AFP in English 0942 GMT 24 Feb 91

[By Allen Nacheman]

[Text] Al-Khafji, Saudi Arabia, Feb 24 (AFP)—The U.S. battleships Missouri and Wisconsin, riding in tandem in the Gulf off Kuwait, pounded Iraqi positions with continuous volleys from their 16-inch guns Sunday as allied air power strafed and bombed from all directions, an AFP correspondent here reported. Sustained thunder-like percussions were clearly audible here, vibrating the earth at the southern limits of this coastal town about 10 kilometers (six miles) from the Kuwaiti border.

Troops at a Saudi Army camp interviewed at 11 a.m. (0800 gmt) quoted military radio reports from north of al-Khafji as saying the bombing and shelling began at 4 a.m. local time (0100 gmt) and had continued without letup. The allied land offensive against the Iraqis as launched around that time.

They said their colleagues positioned on the extreme northern Saudi coast had a clear view of the Missouri and Wisconsin as they commenced firing. They said the scream of warplanes soaring north—and the muffled roar of high-altitude bombers—had begun shortly after the start of shelling. They said their radio indicated allied artillery fire began at around the same time. There was no return fire from Iraqi positions, they said.

The troops in the lightly armed Saudi outpost here said they had no orders to join the battle, and were to retain their positions until further notice. They appeared relaxed Sunday morning as they took breakfast of beans, beef, flat bread and tea while watching live CNN reports from the Pentagon and the White House on an ageing black and white television hooked up to a corroded truck battery.

The main north-south coastal highway meanwhile was clogged with military supply convoys loaded with artillery shells, gasoline, and Saudi and U.S. tanks and armored personnel carriers. The traffic was forming a revolving door on the main access road, with fully loaded trucks northbound, empty ones southbound.

A main staple seen aboard the trucks: thousands of cartons of bottled drinking water. Allied troop trucks, predominantly British, were seen racing north on a desert road paralleling the main highway, and U.S. helicopter gunships followed along side.

All military vehicles in the region bore large black inverted letter "V's" on their sides, and bright orange banners on their roofs, the recognized signs of allied forces aimed at avoiding mistaken bombings, referred to as "friendly fire."

A steady rain darkened the already smoke-shrouded sky and laid a dark velvet knap over the desert sand. The rain, deemed advantageous for allied forces should the Iraqi forces use gas weapons, rendered the highway slick with mud, and at least one supply truck fully loaded with artillery shells was seen overturned on the shoulder. There there was no evidence of fire or explosion. [sentence as received]

This border region has been largely devoid of civilian population since it was evacuated immediately after the start of the allied aerial campaign to librate Kuwait on January 17. The city of approximately 25,000 people is well within the range of Iraqi artillery in occupied Kuwait. Al-Khafji was also the object of the first large-scale ground engagement of the war about three weeks ago when Iraqi troops moved in to occupy the city. They were driven out by U.S. Marines.

UAE Forces Attain Targets

NC2402191091 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1822 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 24 Feb (WAKH)—An official source in the United Arab Emirates [UAE] Armed Forces General Command has announced that the UAE forces taking part in the battle to liberate Kuwait attained their designated targets this morning. The source added that the forces bravely and boldly waged a land and air battle, and managed to achieve the goals set for them by the military command without any losses worth mentioning.

In a statement to the EMIRATE NEWS AGENCY, the source said that the UAE forces [words indistinct] scoring direct hits and inflicting heavy losses on the forces of aggression. The source added that hundreds of Iraqi soldiers have been captured in the positions liberated by the UAE land forces.

Forces Advance on Kuwait City

LD2502054391 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 0500 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] U.S. Marines and Arab forces at dawn today penetrated deeply into Kuwaiti territories in readiness to enter the Kuwaiti capital after breaking through the [word indistinct] Iraqi Army.

The First and Second Divisions of the [U.S.] Marines with Saudi, Kuwaiti, Egyptian, and Syrian forces have overcome Iraqi fortifications. A spokesman for the Second Division of the U.S. Marines, Col. John Holly, said that the advance forces, which include tanks and artillery, are very near the city of Kuwait, and they are fortifying their positions.

Officers of the Joint Forces said that those forces did not meet strong resistance from the Iraqi defensive lines yesterday as the [Iraqi] soldiers' morale had collapsed.

U.S. Troops 'Inside' City

NC2402104191 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1018 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Military sources belonging to the coalition forces have reported that the British 1st Armored Brigade has entered Iraq via its border with Saudi Arabia along with the U.S. 7th Army Corps, and that the British 2d Naval Division and the U.S. 18th Army Corps have actually entered Kuwaiti territory. [military designations as heard]

According to the reports, the battles are raging on four fronts extending all along the 125-mile Kuwaiti-Saudi border, in addition to the Iraqi borders with Saudi Arabia.

Hasan al-Sanad, a Kuwaiti official and exile, has told REUTER that allied paratroopers landed today in Kuwait City shortly after the ground war began. He cited residents of the city as saying that the sky was filled with paratroopers. He said: We are hearing good news. U.S. forces are inside the city.

Reported Under Allied Control

LD2402133791 London KUNA in Arabic 1311 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] War Front With Iraq [as received], 24 Feb (KUNA)—Reports received from KUNA correspondents at the war front with Iraq say that Kuwait City is now under the control of the international allied forces, only few hours after the start of the full land offensive launched to expel the Iraqi occupation forces from Kuwait.

These reports are talking about a significant and large-scale military force composed of all the branches of the allied forces. These operations took the form of surrounding positions of the Iraqi forces in Kuwait by a thrust inside Iraqi land to cut off the equipment and ammunition rear lines of the Iraqi forces in Kuwait.

The reports also say that there are huge paratroop forces in principal regions of Kuwait City and that an amphibious landing managed to penetrate Iraqi defensive lines on the coast and advance toward a number of regions.

KUNA correspondents at the front say that during the first hours of the full offensive, the U.S. AL-82 motorized infantry unit landed in the southern coast of the capital and in other nearby areas, while "it seems that other amphibious forces landed on the Kuwaiti coast." These forces are currently engaging the Iraqi defenses along the whole coast.

Reports indicate that the first penetration of the Iraqi frontline forces "was easier than expected" and that the allied forces did not meet any significant resistance from

Iraqi soldiers, whose positions have been subjected to intense air attack by allied air forces for more than five weeks.

KUNA correspondents say thousands of Iraqi forces surrendered to the international coalition forces during the first few hours of the offensive. They pointed out that the Iraqi forces have greatly retreated. According to reports, the area between the Saudi eastern city of Hafr al-Batin and al-Wafrah, in southern Kuwait, is empty of any Iraqi forces.

The correspondents point out, quoting reports from inside Kuwait, that the skies of the capital were filled with airborne forces after the start of the offensive.

Other reports received by Kuwaiti correspondents from sources inside Kuwait assert that the Iraqi forces have begun systematic destruction of installations and public buildings in Kuwait City.

They add that the destruction includes public buildings as well as the headquarters of the National Assembly.

4 or 5 Towns Said Liberated

NC2402135291 Paris AFP in English 1346 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, Feb 24 (AFP)—Four or five towns in Kuwait have been liberated and Iraq's elite Republican Guards are under attack from allied troops, a Kuwaiti Air Force captain said here Sunday. Captain Ahmad al-Sabah, 28, a member of Kuwait's deposed ruling family, also told reporters that Iraqi soldiers blew up several banks and ministry buildings in Kuwait City early Sunday.

"Four or five cities have already been liberated but I cannot tell you which ones," said Capt. al-Sabah, a Mirage F-1 pilot who flew a mission over Kuwait as allied forces launched a large-scale ground campaign to drive Iraqi troops from the emirate. He said the Republican Guards deployed along the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border were being attacked by allied troops but he declined to identify the allied forces involved.

Capt. al-Sabah also gave an optimistic evaluation of the ground campaign so far saying it would be over in two days and hopefully by Monday, Kuwait's National Day. He said the allies expected at least 50,000 of Iraq's more than 540,000 troops in Kuwait and southern Iraq to surrender in "two or three days."

He said the U.S.-led coalition stepped up bombing missions on Saturday and Sunday, flying the highest number of sorties since the war began January 17. The Kuwaiti Air Force captain said that visibility was poor on Sunday with cloud cover of about 3,000 feet (910 meters) over much of the occupied emirate and "a lot of smoke" from blazing oil wells in northern Kuwait. "The smoke was everywhere," he said.

Capt. al-Sabah said that he could not confirm a report that U.S. paratroops had been dropped over Kuwait City. He said that he did not encounter a lot of anti-aircraft fire during his Mirage F-1 mission over Kuwait on Sunday. Capt. al-Sabah said that Iraqi troops had set fire to "all the biggest banks and ministries."

"They were exploded early this morning," he said. Capt. al-Sabah said that there was no Iraqi Air Force activity on Sunday as allied troops blasted through earthen and sand breastworks along the border and into Kuwait and southern Iraq. He said there had been no reports of chemical weapons use by Iraqi forces.

Spokesman: Forces Achieving Aims

LD2402143491 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] A military spokesman from the Joint Forces and Theater of Operations Command states that the Saudi Armed Forces, which began advancing into Kuwait at dawn today, along with participating troops from fraternal and friendly forces, are continuing to achieve their mission and realize their aim of liberating Kuwait from the aggressive Iraqi forces with extreme efficiency, as outlined by the Operation Desert Storm plan.

The spokesman said that during the past few hours the number of Iraqi POW's has reached approximately 2,000, and that the operations for liberation are proceeding with great success, with God's assistance, and without resulting in any mentionable losses for our Armed Forces. Thanks be to God.

No 'Significant' Casualties

LD2402210791 Riyadh SPA in English 1919 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Riyadh, Feb 24, SPA—A military spokesman at the Command of the Joint Forces and Theatre of Operations announced today that the Saudi forces which launched earlier today a major ground assault against the occupying Iraqi forces in Kuwait along with the fraternal and friendly forces, have been permforming their mission efficiently and skillfully in the line of the set plan for Desert Storm operations.

The ground assault aims at the liberation of Kuwait from the yoke of the Iraq occupation. The military spokesman said the number of the Iraqi prisoners of war has so far reached about 2000. With the grace of almighty God the military operations for the liberation of Kuwait are progressing well without causing significant casualties or losses, he said.

'Hundreds' of Iraqi Pilots Rebel

PM2202120391 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 21 Feb 91 p 1

[Unattributed report: "It Is Being Said"]

[Text] Four Iraqi pilots have arrived in Iran and asked to contact the embassy of a Western state in order to

request political asylum. Two of them contacted their relatives in Tehran and told them that hundreds of their colleagues in Iraq have rebelled against the military leadership.

'Thousands' of Iraqis Surrender

LD2402051991 London KUNA in Arabic 0502 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Text] Riyadh, 24 Feb, (KUNA)—A military source at the Joint Command announced that scattered remnants of the Iraqi forces, estimated at thousands of Iraqi soldiers, started to surrender after the start of the ground battle for the liberation of Kuwait.

The source told KUNA [KUWAIT NEWS AGENCY] here today that the Iraqi Republican Guard forces concentrated north of Kuwait are considered "finished" as a result of the continuous bombing of these forces since the beginning of Operation Desert Storm for the liberation of Kuwait.

'Complete Collapse' of Iraqi Forces

LD2402060291 London KUNA in Arabic 0525 GMT 24 Feb 90

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpts] Dhahran, 24 Feb (KUNA)—Informed Kuwaiti sources said here today that the Kuwaiti forces are participating by the side of the Arab and friendly forces in the just ground battle that started at dawn today for the liberation of Kuwait and for driving out the Iraqi invading forces.

The sources informed KUNA that the international alliance's forces are advancing inside Kuwaiti territory from the various axes of fighting and that tens of thousands of Iraqi soldiers have surrendered so far. The sources expect the number of Iraqi prisoners in this battle to exceed 100,000.

The sources pointed out that the alliance's forces have entered Kuwaiti territory by a distance of 40 kilometers so far, and that the battle is developing quickly and witnesses a complete collapse of the Iraqi forces, while amphibious landings on Kuwaiti shores have started.

The reliably informed sources pointed out that columns of the international alliance's forces are on their way now to the north, toward the city of Kuwait, and that other forces will pound the Republican Guard forces and cut Iraqi supplies in the south of Iraq. [passage omitted]

The sources said that the international alliance's forces are waiting at present to end Iraqi forces' artillery shelling on order to liberate it and clear it completely. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Salih Interviewed, Asks Arabs To Aid Iraq

EA2202224091 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 21 Feb 91

[Text] In a press interview published by the Egyptian newspaper, AL-AHALI, brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, said the sympathies and emotions of the entire Arab homeland are on the side of Iraq, naturally so because considerable damage has been done to Iraq's economic and industrial establishments and its developmental structures. The same goes for Kuwait and the remaining countries of the region.

The brother chairman said: Iraq's capabilities will diminish, and this is known, but I have talked with the brothers in Iraq. The brothers in Iraq replied: This is our fate and our destiny, but we are not prepared to bow down. We shall die or be martyred, but with our heads and stature remaining high without humiliation. We know that damage will be inflicted on us, but we shall remain steadfast for days, months, and years to confront this challenge. The brother chairman added: I say that the Arab and Islamic nation, 29 days since the inception of this aggression, should stand by Iraq, and every state, commensurate with its material resources, should help Iraq in all spheres and fields.

Salih Condemns Allied Land Offensive

AB2402205291 Paris AFP in French 1921 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Sanaa, 24 Feb (AFP)—Yemeni head of state General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih vigorously condemned the allied land offensive to liberate Kuwait. He said the attack is being led by "the countries of the imperialist-Zionist coalition," according to an official source in Sanaa.

General Salih, during a joint meeting of the provisional Presidential Council and the Consultative Council, also expressed his "regrets about the Security Council's ineffectiveness in finding a peaceful solution due to the obstinacy of the United States and its allies."

The Presidential Council and the Consultative Council, which include political personalities of all stripes, also accused the United States of defying international law and the UN Charter by imposing its neo-imperialist policies and destroying Iraq. They expressed their "confidence in the capacity of the Iraqi people and its Army to repulse the aggressor" and called on "the Arab peoples and Muslims to assume their responsibilities regarding this premediated aggression."

General Salih, addressing thousands of Yemenis assembled before the presidential palace, affirmed that Yemen will continue its efforts to put an end to the "American-Zionist aggression."

The demonstrators appealed to the country's leaders "to take effective measures in support of Iraq," to "break

diplomatic relations with countries of the coalition" against Iraq, and to permit Yemenis "to voluntarily engage in jihad (holy war) alongside Iraq." The pro-Iraqi demonstrations took place today in Sanaa and Aden, the principal cities of Yemen.

Al-Bid: War Destroying Iraq, Not Freeing Kuwait

NC2202190591 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with 'Ali Salim al-Bid, deputy chairman of the Yemeni Presidential Council, by George Tarif; date not given]

[Text] [Tarif] 'Ali Salim al-Bid, deputy chairman of the Yemeni Presidential Council: Given the Iraqi initiative and the Soviet peace proposals, how would you assess the current peace efforts with regard to the Gulf war?

[Al-Bid] We in the Republic of Yemen appreciate the efforts made by the friends in the Soviet Union and our brothers in Iran. We will spare no efforts in cooperating with them or others to find a peaceful way to halt this Arab-Islamic bloodletting, end the depletion of Arab resources, and bring this catastrophe to an end. As a matter of fact, we feel that all that is taking place on our lands and the losses and devastation occurring on all Arab lands is a depletion of Arab wealth aimed at harming the Arab people's culture and history, including those of the Yemeni people. Of course, it hurts us a great deal to see ourselves serve as mere spectators to these painful developments. These sentiments of pain which we feel are being experienced by every Arab, particularly here in Yemen. All Yemeni citizens are disturbed by this. They follow with great interest and are cruelly pained by the continuation of this problem and crisis. We hope that all well-meaning parties and peace-loving nations will be granted success. We will always be in the forefront of those advocating peaceful solutions. We will work to avert further escalation of this crisis, because once the sparks are ignited, it will be difficult for many parties to avoid catching fire. Now that this initiative was launched by our brothers in Iraq and there are good efforts being made in this regard by the Soviets and Iranians, I believe we should all join hands with them to develop this initiative, despite what we have heard regarding the intransigent position espoused by the opposing party, by the coalition states, and by the United States of America in particular, which was determined to start the war in the beginning, and which is now determined to continue the war. This seems to be the course being pursued by the United States under these circumstances.

[Tarif] Deputy Chairman of the Presidential Council: Considering the American and allied position on the Iraqi initiative and the Soviet proposals and the continuation of the American-Atlantic aggression against Iraq, what is your perception of the future of the world and the region?

[Al-Bid] The future of the region and the world is clear if we are to bear in mind the course pursued by the United States and its allies. We are entering a phase that we have never wished for. We used to believe that once the world was relieved of the East-West cold war, a new phase in which humane relations would prevail would be heralded. In this new phase, we hoped that the status of international organizations would be bolstered. We also hoped that the concepts of equality would be enhanced. We hoped that relations among nations would be governed by mutual interests and benefits. Furthermore, we wished that peace would permeate these ties. We wished that there would be sincere efforts to avoid arbitrariness and force. We thought that we would then resolve all of our issues on this planet through peaceful solutions, through negotiations, and also through recognition of everyone's rights. We expected we would all live in peace. These were our expections.

Given this course and policy, which is being pursued by the United States and its allies, we realize that it will be a new phase heralding tragic circumstances, the beginning of which is what we see today: the destruction of cities, the destruction of human beings, the destruction of life, and the use of the most sophisticated means of destruction, of the war machine, and of its sophisticated technology. It seems that this course is being currently pursued. The only thing that I can say right now is that this course makes me pessimistic. This pessimism will be maintained if the United States shows a determination to pursue this course. That is because this course ushers in another thing. The approach and course pursued thus far is very regrettable. We did not expect the United States to pursue this course. Yemen has always been in favor of creating new circumstances. When we were finished with the cold war, we did not expect the hot war to be unleashed against a small, developing Arab and Islamic country; a war meant to crush all of its capabilities, and to expose it to this ferocious onslaught. Even if these countries were to intervene, we hoped they would comply with the UN Security Council [UNSC] resolution. Their actual conduct, however, has shown practices overstepping the bounds of the UNSC resolutions. What is actually taking place is a destruction of Iraq rather than a liberation of Kuwait. I hope that there will be a reconsideration, and that the decisionmakers who have a large number of troops and destructive fleets deployed in the region will think of the future of mankind and also of their own interests. That is because I do not know how they can protect the interests which they seek to maintain, given their pursuit of this course. What has taken place thus far has produced immense concern in the world. As for us, the small developing nations, we share a grave concern over the pursuit of this course.

[Tarif] Thank you, 'Ali Salim al-Bid, deputy chairman of the Yemeni Presidential Council chairman, for this interview. Thank you sir.

[Al-Bid] You are most welcome.

[Tarif] Thanks.

[Al-Bid] Relay my greetings to the heroic people, the fraternal Jordanian people. Our hope is that we all will continue to maintain our steadfastness against this onslaught,

because it is actually a cultural and intellectual onslaught targeting us all as Arabs and Muslims. Thanks.

[Tarif] Thank you, sir.

[Al-Bid] Thanks.

Council Praises Iraqi Response to Soviet Plan

EA2302210591 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] This morning the Council of Representatives continued the proceedings of the second sitting of its second annual convention's first session under the chairmanship of Dr. Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, the speaker of the Council. In this sitting, the Council considered the latest developments in the Arabian peninsula and the Gulf as well as the efforts and initiatives being made to end the Gulf war by peaceful means. This was done within the framework of the Council's continuing follow-up of the crisis and its developments.

The Council expressed its appreciation for Iraq's positive response to the Soviet peace initiative and welcomed fraternal Iraq's response on the basis of Iraq's realization of its humanitarian responsibility; its appreciation of the real value of man in this life; its concern for the establishment of peace and the provision of the means for a durable peace and stability in the region; and its legitimate call for solving difficulties and issues affecting the region through peaceful dialogue and peaceful negotiations.

The Council considered the rejection by the United States and its allies of the Soviet initiative and the ultimatum to Iraq to withdraw today, as well as the vacillating stands in some quarters regarding the issue of peace, as clear intransigence and a continuation of the premeditated intention of destroying Iraq's strength and machinations against the present and the future of the Arab-Muslim nation and its interests.

The Council of Representatives in the Yemeni Republic, as it follows the developments of events in the region and the Arab, Muslim, and international efforts to bring about peace, as well to propose the principle of negotiations as a basis for solving all issues in dispute, supports all activities by the forces of good in the world which strive for peace and condemns strongly the stands of states that accept no option other than war as a means of achieving their hostile objectives, thereby ignoring their peoples' interests and the appeals of international public opinion for peace. As the Council denounces the intransigence and arrogance of those hostile forces and their negative stand regarding the international efforts and calls for peace, it appeals to all parliaments in Arab and Muslim states and in the world as a whole to condemn this bloodthirsty stand bent on obliterating human beings. This is clear today from the suspect U.S.-led coalition's use of napalm bombs against the fraternal Iraqi people. Action in support of appeals for peace and justice in all parts of the world must continue.

The Council of Representatives also discussed in today's session the draft law on income tax. The Council will continues its sitting tomorrow.

Aden Radio Outlines Soviet Peace Plan, Message

EA2402123091 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, has received a message from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev notifying the brother chairman of the results of Soviet-Iraqi discussions and the Iraqi leadership's approval of the Soviet plan, which includes the following clauses: 1. Iraq agrees to implement Resolution 660; this means an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all its forces from Kuwait to its positions on 1 August 1990. 2. The withdrawal shall commence on the day after the ceasefire and after all military acts on land, in the sea, and in the air have ceased. 3. The withdrawal shall be completed within 21 days, including the withdrawal of forces from Kuwait City within the first four days of this period. 4. Immediately after completing withdrawing forces from Kuwait, the causes that led to the other Security Council resolutions will become invalid. 5. The prisoners of war from both sides will be released and evacuated within three days of the cessation of military operations. 6. Observation and supervision of the ceasefire will be consolidated, and withdrawing forces under supervision of observers or a peacekeeping force based on a new Security Council resolution will take place.

The YEMENI NEWS AGENCY, SABA', has learned that the Soviet president's message included praise for our country's role in the Security Council and said that the world is proceeding toward a peaceful solution to the dispute through practical possibilities to spare blood and avert new victims and renewed destruction, considering Iraq's readiness to carry out steps which Yemen and the Soviet Union have been working toward since the beginning of the dispute. It has become necessary (?to hold) an urgent Security Council meeting to stop the military operations in the Gulf region.

Al-Ashtal Says UNSC Used For Political Goals

NC2402151291 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1245 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with 'Abdallah al-Ahstal, Yemeni representative to the United Nations, by an unidentified reporter in New York on 24 February—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Mr. 'Abdallah, there are reports of your delegation's withdrawal from the Security Council session. What are the reasons for this?

[Al-Ashtal] When the Council met in an unofficial session after the military operations started, and after it became clear that the president of the Council does not have a united formula and there is no possibility of a united stand within the Council, I addressed the Council during the

unofficial meeting and expressed Yemen's surprise over the beginning of the expanded military operations without the approval of the Security Council and outside the framework of Security Council Resolution 678, especially since there is a great possibility of solving this crisis peacefully, and in view of the great dangers behind a ground war and the tragedies and huge losses it can cause. After I made all of this clear, I withdrew from the session and gave Yemen's opinion to the international press. I said in short that the United Nations is being exploited for strategic and political objectives that have nothing to do with the United Nations resolutions or the UN Charter and its principles. I withdrew from the session so that no one would think that the Security Council agrees as a whole to these military operations and that the Council approves the current military action. It is very important that the world knows the Security Council is being politically exploited. We are very sorry about this, at a time when the world is waiting to start a new stage within a just world order.

[Reporter] Thank you Mr. 'Abdallah al-Ashtal, Yemen's representative to the United Nations.

Mass Demonstrations Protest Allied Offensive

'Hundreds of Thousands' March

NC2402124191 Paris AFP in English 1228 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Sanaa, Feb 24 (AFP)—Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets of Yemeni cities Sunday to denounce the allied ground offensive, official Sanaa Radio said. But there were no immediate official reactions from Yemen, a close political ally of Iraq, to the offensive aimed at ending Iraq's nearly seven-month occupation of Kuwait.

In the largest demonstration, tens of thousands of people gathered in Sanaa at the request of a committee for the support of Iraq and the Arab nation, the radio said. The marchers condemned the "allied aggression" against Iraq and called on the Yemeni government to "sever its diplomatic relations with the member countries of the anti-Iraq coalition."

In Aden, demonstrators carried huge portraits of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and his Yemeni counterpart 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. Some of the protesters called for jihad, or Muslim holy war, against the United States and its allies.

Participants Described

EA2402205091 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Today the different governorates of the Republic witnessed well-attended mass demonstrations against the American-Zionist-Atlantic aggression against the Iraqi people. The demonstrators moved through the main streets to public squares carrying placards and repeating slogans condemning the brutal aggression, which aims not only at the capabilities of the fraternal Iraqi people but also at Arab and Muslim capabilities as a whole.

Those who took part in the demonstrations included people's organizations, trade unions, professional unions, political parties and organizations, and other popular sectors and demanded in their slogans that the aggression be stopped. They expressed their denunciation of the insistence by the United States and its allies on escalating the aggression and continuing their strikes against civilian and economic targets [word indistinct] in Iraq, disregarding all efforts that have been made and which continue to be made to stop the bloodshed and find a peaceful solution. [passage omitted]

Commentary Criticizes U.S. Ground Offensive

EA2402203691 Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Ahmad Fad'aq commentary]

[Excerpts] Dear listeners: The U.S.-led coalition forces have carried out their ground attack on Iraq, thereby challenging the international community and the Soviet appeals to the United States to postpone the attack while peace efforts moved forward to solve the Gulf crisis. With regard to this subject, our colleague Ahmad Fad'aq has written for us the following comment, which will be read to you by Ahmad al-Saqqaf:

[Al-Saqqaf] By their attack on Iraq, the coalition forces have placed the world in a dilemma with regard to any efforts to seek a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis. The United States has led the allied forces to support its whims and pushed them to get involved in clashes with the Iraqi forces to further its interests of obliterating the military and economic capabilities of Iraq. [passage omitted]

Reports indicate that the statement made by the U.S. President George Bush on the eve of the ground aggression was prepared several days before. The Cuban representative to the UN Security Council said that the military ground operations were planned earlier by the United States, even before the USSR presented its peace proposals. This confirms that the United States challenged the inclination of the international community toward a peaceful settlement to avert destruction and war, in spite of the fact that the efforts for a peaceful solution were supported by the organization of Arab states [munzzamat al-duwal al-arabiyah] and numerous countries in addition to members of the UN Security Council.

It is deplorable that the United States should challenge the UN Security Council and disregard the efforts of some of its members by directing its forces and the forces of those allied with it to the battlefield against Iraq. [passage omitted]

Saddam Speaks on Allies' Ground Attack 24 Feb

NC2402080891 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0737 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Speech by President Saddam Husayn; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. It is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you and that ye love a thing which is bad for you. And God knoweth and ye know not. [Koranic verses] O great Iraqi people, O valiant men of our heroic Armed Forces. O faithful and honorable people, wherever you are, among the sons of our nation and humanity.

At the time it was decided that the UN Security Council would meet to look into the Soviet peace initiative, which we endorsed, the treacherous committed treachery. The despicable Bush and his filthy agent Fahd and others who have consorted with them in committing crimes, shame, and aggression, committed the treachery. Those cowards who have perfected the acts of treachery, treason, and vileness committed treachery after they departed from every path of virtue, goodness, and humanity. They have committed treachery and waged their large-scale ground assault on our struggling forces this morning. Their objective became known to all who have not known their objective so far. They committed treachery according to their wont and qualities. They even betrayed those who along with them signed the infamous resolutions which were adopted at the UN Security Council prior to the military aggression against our country. They deluded themselves by believing that with those resolutions they were protecting international legitimacy. They betrayed everyone. God, however, is above everyone. He is the One and Only, the Living and Almighty, the Eternal and Omnipotent. He will strike back their treachery on their necks and shame them until their ranks and their failing hordes are repulsed.

From the beginning, the evil ones worked on this path, the path of hostility and evil, to harm the Iraqi people and smother the shining candle in their hearts. Cursed be their intentions and cursed be their deeds. However, they will realize after a while that God's unshakable desire will prevent them from inflicting evil on the people of faith and jihad. They will realize after a while that the great people of Iraq and the brave Iraqi Armed Forces are not like what they think or imagine.

Fight them, O Iraqis, with all the values that you inherited from your great history and with all the values of faith in which you believed as a people who believe in God and who are proud of their dignity and their right to make choices and decisions.

Fight them, O brave, splendid men, O men of the Mother of Battles and al-Qadisiyah. Fight them with your faith in God. Fight them in defense of every free and honorable woman and every innocent child and in defense of the values of manhood, values, and the military honor which you shoulder. Fight them because with their defeat you will be at the last entrance of the victory of victories. The war will end with all that the situation entails of dignity, glory, and triumph for your people, Army, and nation. If the opposite takes place, God forbid, there will only be the ignominious abyss to which the enemies are aspiring to push you so that Iraq, the [Arab] nation, and humanity might live in the darkness of a long night. Fight them, O men. They do not carry the values that entitle them to be more manly, courageous, and capable than you.

As men collide with each other, the weapons of supremacy will disappear and the only thing that remains to decide the final result will be the faith of the faithful and the courage of those who adhere to their noble, nationalistic, and faithful stand of jihad.

Fight them and show no mercy toward them, for this is how God wishes the faithful to fight the infidel. Your sons, mothers, fathers, and kin, and the entire population of Iraq and the world are beholding your performance today. Do what pleases God and brings dignity to the homeland and the people. Fight them in the style of faithful men. They are the camp of atheism, hypocrisy, and treachery, and you are the camp of faith, unshifting principles, loyalty, and sincerity.

Fight them and victory will be yours, as will be dignity, honor, and glory. God is great. God is great. God is great. Let the miserable meet their fate. Victory is sweet with the help of God.

RCC Statement on Bush's 'Disgraceful' Ultimatum

NC2202204091 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1951 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Statement issued by the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council on 22 February—read by announcer]

[Text] Brother citizens, a spokesman for the Revolutionary Command Council [RCC] has stated the following:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Within the framework of further moral degradation and degeneration toward the bottom of the abyss, the enemy of God, Bush, in his statement today, attempted to show or suggest that what Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz has accepted in Moscow and His Excellency President Saddam Husayn's speech yesterday are two different things. If Bush wants to deceive anyone with this statement, he will deceive only himself, because Tariq 'Aziz is authorized by His Excellency leader President Saddam Husayn to commit himself to what he sees fit and to what will be agreed upon with the Soviets regarding their peace initiative.

Moreover, Bush tries to set quixotic ultimatums for Iraq to withdraw by tomorrow, as he said. We do not know if Bush, with this disgraceful ultimatum, is suggesting that the peace initiative was the result of his ultimatums, or if

he wanted to imply to the world that he has triumphed over Iraq, he and his failing allies.

It is as if he imagines that the world does not know everything he and his allies have done since the night of 16 January. It was no more than his ravens executing a cowardly plan to destroy the Iraqi civilians' property, the houses of worship, and the houses of the innocent civilians, as was the case with the al-'Amiriyah shelter, al-Fallujah, al-Mawsil, al-Nasiriyah, Basra, Karbala', and all other Iraqi cities and villages, as well as the Iraqi rural areas, and even the shepherds and the bedouin.

Bush and the allies who collaborated with him in their cowardly crimes have avoided beginning the battle with our courageous ground troops because they realize that they lack the legitimacy of a position that would enable them to face the army of jihad and faith.

Bush may have wanted to take a hasty position so he could enjoy his weekend. He made hasty statements to reach the decision—which his evil soul likes more than others—sooner, the decision to continue the aggression.

We like to stress that Iraq wants peace and has seriously worked to support the Soviet initiative and facilitate its success, not out of fear of Bush's threats, or out of respect for him, because we do not respect him or fear his unjust power. He has tried his bad luck throughout the previous days, with all the criminal tools and weapons that his blood-stained hands could reach. In our position, we express our respect for what we believe in and for what we believe is necessary for our people and mankind. We take our position out of respect for people we respect, who do not include the enemy of God and the colleague of the devil, Bush.

Bush's talk about the destruction of property in Kuwait is also useless [kha'ib] talk. It seems that Bush does not know what was destroyed in Kuwait or in other fields in Iraq, whether what he destroyed was petroleum facilities or other property. Bush has not spared the destruction that the most violent terrorists and invaders spared. Therefore, he is not among those who have the right to assess any act or raise accusations. If Bush denies this and denies his destructive act against other petroleum and economic facilities, whether in transporting, producing, or extracting oil in Kuwait or Iraq as a whole, we call on the Security Council to form a neutral committee. We nominate the PRC, the USSR, and the sides that are not parties to the fighting or that did not support the parties to the fighting. The Security Council would add these countries to them [the PRC and the USSR] so that they will all be informed of the civil and economic destruction, whether in Kuwait or in Iraq as a whole, and to learn about any of it [this destruction] that occurred as a result of military requirements and any of it that occurred where the military requirements did not have any role in it.

The talk about the strikes with the Iraqi missiles that Bush called Scud missiles is really funny as if Bush, who claims that he is the general or commander in chief of the aggressive operations of the so-called Desert Storm operation, knows nothing about the day and night aggression of his air and ground forces, whose criminal acts escalated after the news of the Soviet proposal appeared.

Thus, where is the cease-fire agreement that allows Bush to criticize Iraq's shelling of definite targets with its missiles? Or has Bush imagined that Iraq should remain silent while Bush attacks and makes belligerent remarks in his abominable, childish statements?

Vice Chairman Ibrahim Comments

NC230219349i Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1840 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Brothers, the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY asked 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council, the following question: Mr. Vice Chairman, there are reports about a Soviet initiative that Iraq has accepted. The initiative is on its way to the UN Security Council for discussion, so that it will adopt a resolution under which fighting will stop and the war will end. At the same time, there are reports about U.S. ultimatums and statements that ignore the Soviet initiative and that are diametrically opposed to it. At least, the Americans are trying to imply in their remarks and ultimatums that they want to impose their will not only on Iraq but also on the permanent members of the Security Council. How do you explain this and what is Iraq's stand on this or that?

'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council, answered: You know that Iraq wants peace and that it did not want war. However, the Americans are known for their aggressiveness, especially Bush personally, enemy of God. I do not say that Bush is the colleague of the devil; I say that Bush is the devil himself, who has pushed matters to aggression, disregarding all the chances to keep the region away from war if he had paid attention to this then. Now it seems that he and his allies, especially Fahd, the traitor of the two holy mosques, want to complete the crime of destroying and harming Iraq, whether economic, scientific, cultural, and other targets, or the people, especially unarmed innocent people, including women and children. On the basis of these wicked aggressive plans, no sooner had Bush learned about the Soviet initiative and about Iraq's acceptance than he and his allies and accomplices in the crime began issuing successive statements and continuous ultimatums to divert attention from the Soviet initiative. The liar Bush has even stooped so low as to claim that he thought of an initiative similar to the Soviet initiative and that his initiative contains an ultimatum to Iraq to withdraw within the hours he specified.

Bush, who claims to have experience in armies, has shown by such talk that he knows nothing about armies or the requirements for their deployment or their withdrawal. It seems that he is still living under the influence of U.S. movies and their unsuccessful star Rambo, not to mention the bad intentions that Bush demonstrates in

his ultimatums and statements. By so doing, he thinks that he will be able to create confusion in public opinion, thus diverting attention away from the Soviet initiative.

We support the Soviet initiative. His Excellency President leader Saddam Husayn and the Revolution Command Council [RCC] have expressed this in the positions taken or the statements and reports made by His Excellency President Saddam Husayn and by the RCC. The U.S. ultimatums are nothing but aggressive ultimatums that we do not care about, because we are at war with them, and the air and land aggression is continuing. However, the standards and exigencies of politics should have prompted Bush and his allies to lessen their excesses and hostility rather than increasing them. The experience of the past was supposed to have taught Bush and traitor Fahd how to respect themselves and respect others. But it seems that those with bad manners cannot do anything right. The men of our Armed Forces, including the land troops, will not be so lax as to let tricks or a desperate aggressive act pass. There is no way for those who want the war to stop and end in accordance with a special agreement other than to support the Soviet initiative and abandon cheap maneuvers and the methods of intelligence deceptions under which Bush and his unjust band were brought up. May God guide us, and we—our people and our Army—will be victorious, God willing.

INA Reports 'Aziz' Moscow News Conference

NC2302141591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1333 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Feb (INA)—Iraq has approved [wafaq] the modified six-point Soviet initiative.

During a news conference in Moscow, Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, said that the Revolution Command Council [RCC] yesterday approved [aqarra] these points.

The points in the initiative provide for the withdrawal of forces, immediately after a cease-fire on land, sea, and in the air is reached, to the positions at which they were deployed on 1 August. The withdrawal will be completed within 21 days, while the withdrawal from Kuwait will take place within four days.

The initiative renders the subsequent [al-lahiqah] Security Council resolutions invalid after the withdrawal of forces from Kuwait. The initiative provides for the release of all prisoners of war within three days after the halt of fighting and cease-fire. Observers or peacekeeping forces shall supervise the cease-fire and the withdrawal of forces in accordance with what the UN Security Council will define.

Tariq 'Aziz has denied the U.S. accusations that Iraq created an environmental catastrophe as a result of the destruction of oilfields in Kuwait. He alluded in this regard to the statement made by the RCC spokesman in which he called on the Security Council to form a special committee to determine what side is responsible for the effects resulting from the bombardment and military operations carried out by the U.S.-led allied forces.

'Aziz Lauds Soviet Efforts

NC2302154591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has lauded the Soviet Union's efforts to reach a peaceful solution to the situation in the Arab Gulf region.

During a news conference in Moscow this morning, Tariq 'Aziz said that Iraq is particularly grateful for the efforts by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and the Soviet Government in this regard. The foreign minister pointed to last night's Revolution Command Council statement which affirmed that Iraq wants peace and has made serious efforts to support the Soviet initiative and facilitate the mission to ensure its success.

The INA correspondent in Moscow has reported that the foreign minister conveyed Iraq's approval [muwafaqat] of the plan declared by the Soviet Union. He said that the Iraqi Government completely approves and supports this plan.

The foreign minister scoffed at the U.S. accusation that Iraq is destroying the oilfields in Kuwait. He stressed that these accusations are mere pretexts and groundless. He called on the UN Security Council to form a neutral committee to determine the level of destruction caused to civilian and economic areas, whether in Kuwait or in Iraq as a whole.

Saddam Chairs Joint RCC, Party Meeting 23 Feb

NC2302152091 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1510 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] His Excellency leader President Saddam Husayn has chaired a joint meeting of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and the Ba'th Party Regional Command. The conferees studied the political situation and the current developments in the region.

Chairs Second Meeting 24 Feb

NC2402152191 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn chaired a joint meeting of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and the regional command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party.

Communiques, Statements Outline Situation

Forces Said 'Completely in Control'

NC2302112391 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Communique No. 59 issued by the Armed Forces General Command—rad by announcer]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. At these decisive moments in our nation's history the people's Armed Forces are responding to the call of sacred duty. Their faith in God's victory and their confidence in the great capabilities which they possess and in their strategic depth, which is represented by the entire Iraqi people—indeed the whole Arab nation—are increasing. The descendants of the faithful mujahidin, who raised the banner of Islam aloft and crushed the empires of idolatory and misguidance, are able today under the banner of God is great itself to confront the new powers of evil and to establish the homeland's right and man's right to a free, dignified, honorable, proud, and secure life.

While the infidel enemies have rejected and are rejecting the peace initiatives to accomplish their premedidated intentions against our homeland, Iraq, we will not hesitate and we will seek to turn the ground war, vhich they have wanted, into a hellfire that will sear their scoundrels and the great crater of death into which their cohorts will tumble. Along with God's assistance, we possess our wise and capable leadership; our people's awareness, zeal, and strong enthusiasm to fight the adversaries; and our heroic Armed Forces with their brilliant field commanders and courage, heroism, unparalleled combat experience, superior numbers, and destructive weapons. Above all we have an unshakable faith in the objective for which we are fighting and in God's victory, which cannot be approached by the power of any creature, whoever he is. The Americans, their allies, and agents will discover that they are the losers before God's will and the perseverance of the patient faithful people.

Following is a roundup of our operations and the enemy's acts of aggression during the past 24 hours:

1. Further to our Communique No.58 issued yesterday at noon in which we announced that the enemy has begun his ground war by confronting the two operations sectors of al-Mansur and al-Hamzah forces: The enemy, as of 1130 of Thursday, 21 February, began pushing a group of armored cars and armored troops carriers to attack the al-Mansur forces first. As we declared in our Communique No. 57 issued at noon yesterday [as heard], our forces managed to defeat the aggressors and to inflict heavy losses on them at approximately 1845 the same day. At 2015 the same day, the enemy tried anew to approach our sectors and to perpetuate contact with them, and to reinforce his sectors and compensate for his losses. At 2300 the same night, our forces managed to halt the enemy and to silence most of the sources of his fire. The enemy continued to try in vain to approach throughout Thursday night and yesterday. Our sectors destroyed a number of the enemy's tanks and forced the rest of them to withdraw.

At 1430 yesterday, the enemy began to dispatch a fresh consignment of armor and armored vehicles. Our brave forces confronted the enemy forces and inflicted massive losses in men and equipment. Despite its repeated failures, the enemy has been making vain attempts to approach our positions. Meanwhile, the brave Hamzah forces and the heroic al-Mansur forces have continued to destroy all of its attempts, inflicting additional important losses in men and equipment. Our forces are completely in control of the situation, insisting on destroying the remnants of the aggressors and defeating them.

2. In addition to the holy jihad which our forces are waging with complete success, God be praised, our heroic missile forces have continued to deal devastating blows to the dens of the aggressors, as follows:

A. After midnight last night, a destructive blow with al-Husayn missiles was dealt to the city of Riyadh, the capital of the house of Sa'ud, the infidels, the treacherous, and the agents. Our missiles pounded their targets.

B. At dawn today and with God's help, a destructive missile strike was directed at the Fahd Airport, also using al-Husayn missiles.

Having carried out these mission, our launchers returned safely, God be praised.

3. Using tactical field missiles, our heroic forces in the southern sector of operations directed a series of lethal strikes at the al-Khafji oil and military area. Our missiles pounded their targets.

4. In expression of the enemy's despicableness and spite against our citizens and the cultural landmarks of our progress, enemy planes conducted 39 sorties and missile attacks against residential areas, roads, bridges, passageways, and certain civilian establishments that provide daily services for the citizens. The enemy also carried out 210 sorties against some military targets in the southern sector of operations. With God's help, one enemy target was destroyed.

Glory to you, O brave Iraqi soldiers wherever you are in your defense of the homeland. Your victory comes from God, he is the best of supporters.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command
[Dated] 7 Sha'ban 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 23 February 1991

Statement on 23 Feb Tel Aviv Attack

NC2302193291 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1915 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] A military spokesman has stated the following:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. With the aim of punishing the Zionist scoundrels, who are behind every crime, plot, and aggression committed against this nation and the great people of Iraq, and

because the Zionists have conspired through their intrigues and puppets against the chances for peace Iraq called for, our heroic missile force this evening dealt a destructive strike to Tel Aviv, the capital of Zionist entity, with al-Husayn missiles. Our missiles dealt destructive blows to their targets, and the launchers of our missiles returned safely, praise be to God.

All praise go to the men of our missile force—officers and other ranks.
[Dated] 23 February

Egyptian Participation in Fighting Noted

NC2402112691 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1116 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] A military spokesman has stated the following:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. It has been proved to us beyond any doubt—and it is a regrettable and shameful matter for those who bring shame to themselves and their people—that part of [hajman min] the Egyptian Army has taken part in the treacherous attack, along with a U.S. armored force, on the front of the 14th Division.

Enemy 'Wallowing' in 'Blood and Shame'

NC2402121591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1101 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Communique No. 60 issued by the Armed Forces General Command—read by announcer]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. O great people; O valiant men in our heroic Armed Forces; O people of the Arab and Islamic nation; O good people of the world. The treacherous enemy has carried out his evil aggression against the front of the 14th, 18th, 29th, 8th, 26th, and 45th Divisions of the 3d, 7th, and 1st Corps of the jihad and faith and against our heroic marine infantry on Faylakah Island. The aggression began, as the aggressors themselves declared, at exactly 0400—that is, at 0400 at dawn today, 24 February.

Despite all the time that has elapsed and as our leader Saddam Husayn expected in his speech this morning, the enemy is still fighting on most of the fronts of the divisions, which are deployed in small units in defensive positions. However, these are men who have faith in their God, and he has endowed them with greater resolve and guidance.

We say: On most of the fighting axes, the enemy is still wallowing in his blood and shame before our defensive sections, [qata'at satirah] which are not bigger than infantry regiments [afwaj mushah]. This is taking place in all the positions of the divisions we mentioned before. The enemy has also begun engagements on the fronts of some other regiments, representing some of the regiments of the brigades in the original defensive positions.

Despite all that has happened, the faithful men on the fronts of all the divisions and corps to which we have referred succeeded in establishing the first surprise and absorbing the treacherous attempts. Our units, in general, are in the best condition that can be imagined in a circumstance of this kind.

The enemy attack has thus far failed utterly, and the scoundrels of aggressors are crying for help and swimming in their blood on the fronts of the 26th, 45th, 29th, and 8th Divisions and on Faylakah Island, where our units are still holding out and which thwarted the attempts of the failed enemies, contrary to what they said. They have announced that they had succeeded in seizing and overcoming our units.

The fighting is still continuing with the units of the original forward defense positions of the 14th and 18th Divisions. The situation is being maintained under control in a very good manner.

The enemy's attacking units are being subjected to lethal fire from our heroic units. In this way, our units have contained the enemy's offensive and thwarted the assault of the 30 unsuccessful countries which Bush, enemy of God and humanity, is leading.

We have the right, now and in the future also, God willing, to chant forcefully and with the loudest voices: How sweet is victory with the help of God. God is great. Accursed be the lowly.

[Signed] The heroic Armed Forces General Command
[Dated] 8 Sha'ban 1411, corresponding to 24 February 1991

Allied Control of Island Denied

NC2402171991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1636 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Esteemed listeners, we have just received the following:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, a military spokesman has stated the following:

Since the start of the treacherous aggression by Bush and his evil allies, they have been coming up with a series of lies as part of a psychological warfare prepared in advance. What confirms the falsehood of their claims, which are mere fabricated contentions, is that they have prevented their own country's press and television network correspondents from directly covering the military situation.

We challenge Bush, Cheney, George Bush [as heard], and their allies and agents to present convincing proof about their claims. They, for example, claimed that they occupied Faylakah Island. We challenge them to invite the press and television correspondents to go there. They

will not be able to do so, for sure, because the heroic Iraqi forces are in Faylakah.

They also claimed that tens of thousands of Iraqi troops surrendered to them. We again challenge them to show them on television. We challenge them once again to confirm their claim about their amphibious landing. Our shores are standing fast and our forces are guarding them with all firmness, and woe to those who dare approach them.

This method pursued by Bush and his allies in their false propaganda confirms the firm stand of the Iraqi Armed Forces and their steadfastness. They have been fighting valiantly, efficiently, and with discipline, and are inflicting grave losses on the treacherous aggressors since the start of the aggression. The aggression forces have failed to achieve any of the objectives they have sought and announced. They have suffered heavy losses as a result of the heavy blows by the soldiers of right and faith.

Communique Reports 'Epic Fighting'

NC2402180491 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1715 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Military Communique No. 61 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 24 February—read by announcer]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate: The heroic forces of the III Army Corps under Staff Lieutenant General Salah 'Abbud, and the heroic I Army Corps under Staff Lt. Gen. Ibrahim Isma'il continue their epic fighting against the forces of the U.S.-Atlantic alliance and their trivial midget agents. This fighting began on a large-scale [word indistinct] in today's early hours.

As announced in our comunique this morning, our victorious forces succeeded in containing the attacks of the U.S.-Atlantic enemy and foiled their objectives for which the enemy prepared through an extensive media propaganda replete with lies and allegations. The heroic forces of the III and I Corps succeeded in setting on fire and destroying hundreds of enemy tanks and armored personnel carriers, killing or wounding a large number of the enemy's frustrated soldiers. The enemy landed an airborne force behind our lines in the al-Manaqish area southwest of the city of Kuwait. The valiant heroes of our Armed Forces rushed to encircle and engage them in ferocious fighting; the force has been annihilated, with God's help.

Thus, the soldiers of faith and justice have foiled one of the enemy's means, upon which it had been capitalizing the most in its failing media campaign. They do not know that the battle-tested soldiers of Iraq stand in full alert and ready for all eventualities.

In another area of the front, a joint French-British force tried to attack our borders in the area of al-Badiyah al-Gharbiyah. Our alert forces confronted them and repulsed their offensive, after inflicting on them heavy losses. The situation in this sector is completely under control.

This afternoon, American forces joined by a division from the forces of the two failures, Husni and Fahd, attacked the sector of operations of the heroic IV Corps led by Staff Lieutenant General Iyad Salim Zaki on a front where three divisions are deployed. The valiant IV Corps forces succeeded in repulsing the attack in front of the forward positions and inflicted heavy losses in the ranks of the losing aggressors.

Several enemy divisions and formations, including the U.S. 1st Armored Infantry Division, 2d Marine Division, and 1st Armored Division; the French light armor division; amphibious forces; and forces belonging to the agent regimes of Husni and Fahd took part in the attack launched by the forces of the American-Atlantic alliance.

We call on the American public to ask the enemy of God, Bush, to tell it about the fate of these forces and the losses they have suffered instead of spreading lies and fabrications. The blackout imposed by the U.S. military command on the reports about the battle and the coverup of the details of the losses suffered by the Bush forces are certain proof of the difficult position the forces of aggression are experiencing.

Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God. God bless our valiant soldiers who are experienced in the battles of glory of honor. More epics and heroism under the banner of great Iraq, the banner of God is great, and Saddam Husayn, the leader victorious by the grace of God.

[Signed] The General Command of the Armed Forces
[Dated] 8 Sha'ban 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 24 February 1991

Communique No 62 on Counterattack

NC2502094191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0915 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Communique No. 62 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 25 February]

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Feb (INA)—A communique issued by the Armed Forces General Command has declared that the heroic 3d Corps forces launched a comprehensive counterattack all along the Corps' front.

Communique No. 62 issued at midday today said that last night and this morning the 3d Corps forces carried out epic fighting that lasted eight hours, in which the Iraqi Army proved its efficiency and capability. The brave Corps forces were able to completely expel the enemy from all of the positions it was holding during the hours that followed the beginning of the battle.

The communique added that the heroic 3d Corps force recaptured all the positions along the Corps' front. The enemy forces fled before the determined attack, leaving

behind their burning tanks and vehicles. The enemy forces retreated in utter failure and in defeat.

The following is the text of the communique:

Fierce battles continued yesterday evening and night along the front. After our heroic Armed Forces completed the mission of containing the enemy attack, destroying the enemy equipment and personnel, and annihilating the enemy's failed landing attempt, the heroic 3d Corps forces, under the command of Staff Lieutenant General Salah 'Abbud, started a comprehensive counterattack along the Corps' front, in epic fighting which lasted for eight hours yesterday night and this morning. During the fighting, the Iraqi Army proved its efficiency and capability.

The heroic Corps forces, which comprise Salah-al-Din forces under the command of Staff Brigadier General Husni Zaydan, and the Muhammad al-Qasim forces under the command of Staff Brigadier General Yasin Fulayyih al-Ma'ini, managed, with God's help and the fighters' stamina and resolve, to completely expel the enemy forces from all the positions they were holding during the hours that followed the beginning of the battle.

Our forces recaptured all positions along the 3d Corps front. The enemy forces fled before the determined attack of Salah-al-Din and Muhammad al-Qasim forces, leaving behind their burning tanks and vehicles. The enemy forces retreated in utter failure and defeat.

The situation on the 3d Corps front stabilized in favor of our heroic Armed Forces at 0900 today. Among the failed enemy forces defeated by the forces of Salah-al-Din and Muhammad al-Qasim were the 2d U.S. Armored Division and the 4th Armored Division sent by the agent regime of Husni to join the American-Atlantic aggression against Iraq and its heroic Arab army, in addition to other forces of the regime of despicable Fahd.

Thanks be to God for His victory, and God is great, God is great. God is great and may the the lowly be accursed.

[Signed] The General Command

[Dated] 9 Sha'ban 1411 Hejira, 25 February 1991

Democratic National Rule for Kuwait Studied

NC2302152991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1517 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] The IRAQI NEWS AGENCY has learned from sources close to the Revolution Command Council that the concerned officials are seriously studying establishing a democratic national rule [hukm] in Kuwait in cooperation with the religious and nationalist trends which are hostile to imperialism and foreign control if the United States and its allies reject the Soviet initiative.

Missile Force Commander Cables Saddam on Strikes

NC2302010591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 2245 GMT 22 Feb 91

["Text" of cable from an indentified staff brigadier general, "commander" of the surface-to-surface missile forces—place and date not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate: Leader President mujahid Saddam Husayn, may God preserve you and grant you victory over His enemies. From the commander of the surface-to-surface missiles: God is great. Bountiful praise be to Him. Glory to God. Seest thou not how thy Lord dealt with the companions of the elephant? Did He not make their treacherous plan go astray? And he sent against them flights of birds striking them with stones of baked clay. Then did he not make them like an empty field? [Koranic verses]

Because the gathering of bitterness and hypocrisy is the same, and because [word indistinct] a base for our enemy to strike at the free bastion of the nation in patient and steadfast Iraq, your loyal soldiers, relying on God the Almighty, and the valiant men of the surface-to-surface missile corps acted to implement your honorable orders to pound the spiteful colonialist base of 'Isa in Bahrain, which has been used by the cursed enemy as a base for raids against our dear country. This came after these struggling men carried out their strike against the Khalid military base and its military airport [words indistinct] in the name of God [words indistinct] this military base and airport where the pigs, the commanders of the evil alliance, are staying and planning to harm our valiant Iraq, and desecrating the pure land of Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia].

Earlier, the missile units and formations continued to pound the capital of the hypocrites. It was a day of roaring Iraqi missile wrath and of awakening the humiliated ones as they slept. It was a day when our long-range missiles, made by the clever hands of the strugglers of military industrialization day and night [words indistinct] the rotten heads and their masters. And they have taken gods, other than God, to give them power and glory. Instead, they shall reject their worship and become adversaries against them. [koranic verse] With God as our witness, we will be at your beck and call to execute your constantly sound orders to uphold the banner of God is great, the banner of struggling Iraq, high and fluttering. [words indistinct] We are at your command and may God's peace and blessing be with you.

[Signed] Sincerely, staff brigadier general, commander of the surface-to-surface missile forces

[Dated] 22 February

Visiting Soviet Military Expert Comments

NC2302103391 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0805 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Soviet General Viktor Ivanovich Filatov has said: I am totally confident that the Iraqi forces will gain victory over the American forces and the forces allied with them. In a statement he made in Baghdad yesterday to the press, Gen. Filatov who is the chief editor of the Soviet VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, which is published by the USSR military staff, said: The resolve of the Iraqis, their toughness, and their optimum use of resources is the basis of [word indistinct] war. He praised the efficiency of Iraqi soldiers and their long experience in the battlefield, adding that the Iraqis are accustomed to the geographical terrain because they are fighting in their own land.

Gen. Filatov said that courage is an important factor. He referred to the planes that release their bombs at a high altitude and said that this undoubtedly reveals the lack of courage among U.S. pilots.

Gen. Filatov said that the weapons possessed by the Iraqis, including tanks, are better than the American ones. He added that the Iraqi infantry corps and their equipment are better than those of the Americans. He said that this is an advantage that makes the Americans think twice as they contemplate a ground offensive and maneuvers.

Gen. Filatov praised the ability of Iraqi missiles to inflict heavy losses on the other side. He said that the Patriot missiles have not done anything and actually caused them [the allies] great damage.

Gen. Filatov underlined the Soviet people's support of Iraq and their solidarity with Iraq against the aggression to which that country is being subjected. He said that Iraq's victory is certain.

Gen. Filatov said that Iraq will definitely win the battle. He said that the Americans are fighting for the Zionist enemy first and for victory in the second place. He said that the truth will come out when the ground battle begins and U.S. coffins begin to appear. He added that the U.S. soldiers will refuse to fight because they do not have the will to fight or the will to wage a battle, whereas the Iraqi soldiers have the resolve to defend their homeland. This resolve will benefit the Iraqi troops.

Gen. Filatov said that the loss of enthusiasm among the U.S. forces made them rely on the Air Force in a horrendous and inhumane manner that is costly in terms of human life.

More on Filatov's Statements

NC2302162691 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 23 Feb 91 p 13

[By Sa'd al-Silawi]

[Text] Baghdad—Soviet General Viktor Ivanovich Filatov has warned the United States against using nuclear weapons in its war with Iraq. In an exclusive statement to SAWT AL-SHA'B in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, the Soviet general said that if the United States uses the nuclear bomb, a third world war will break out and all nations in the world will participate in it.

The Soviet general, who is the editor in chief of the Soviet military history magazine [VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL] of the Soviet Armed Forces General Staff, added that all nations in the world and even those whose countries are participating in the aggression will turn against the United States. He said that both logic and the military profession reject the use of this bomb and say there was no need for this war. I believed, he said, there were wise people who knew the consequence of the war. He added that the Gulf crisis could have been solved through political and diplomatic means.

The Soviet general also spoke about the history of World War II, when the United States used the nuclear bomb against Japan. He said that after the use of the nuclear bomb, the Japanese did not surrender and had no desire to surrender and that the war stopped only after the Soviet forces entered the war and destroyed the Japanese Army. That was why the war ended, he said.

Regarding the possible outbreak of the ground war, the Soviet general said that the Iraqi forces will achieve victory when the ground war begins, that the factor of strong nerves and the ideal utilization of time are significant in any ground war, and that the Iraqi soldiers have experience in running the battles. In addition, he said, the Iraqi soldiers are fully aware of the topography of their land. The factor of courage, he said, is also important and our information says that during air raids, the U.S. planes drop their missiles from very high altitudes of 2,000 km [figure as published]. In light of this, he said, the courage of the American pilots can be assessed.

The Soviet general also said that the Soviet tanks used by Iraq are better that U.S. tanks and that the Americans know that the Soviet infantry armored vehicles are better than the American counterparts. This, he added, will make the Americans think twice about how to start the ground confrontation and how to use the land. The Soviet light weapons, he added, are also better than American light weapons.

Gen. Filatov wondered about the mission of the American and Western television networks in Iraq. He said: They are here for two reasons: to give publicity to American weapons and to give information about bombed places.

He asked the journalists of American propaganda: What did the Patriot missile do to the Soviet missiles? The Patriot helped the Soviet missile inflict severe losses on the enemy. The Patriot cannot destroy the missile the

moment the latter is launched. It can destroy it at the height of only 50 meters above the target. This causes more losses.

Now, they are carefully studying this problem in the United States, and they may not continue to use the Patriot because it is an unsuccessful weapon. Producing a more effective anti-Soviet missile weapon will take a long time. The Patriot is manufactured by more than one company, and its assembly and development also take a long time.

Regarding the Soviet people's position on the war, Gen. Filatov affirmed that many people are writing letters in Soviet newspapers expressing their readiness to volunteer to fight beside Iraq. He stressed that the majority of the Soviet people supports Iraq and that only a slight number supports Zionism.

Assessing the military situation in Iraq as well as the American and allied forces's position, he said the Americans were not victorious in any war. They did not achieve victory in Korea or Vietnam. Otherwise, there would not have been a DPRK and one Vietnam. In both Korea and Vietnam, Soviet weapons were used. But in Grenada, only American weapons were used because there were no Soviet weapons in it. In light of this, I can say they will not achieve victory in this war. The American soldiers know well that they are fighting first for Israel and second for money. When the ground war begins and their coffins are sent, they will refuse to fight.

The American soldiers have no will to fight. This means, he added, that the factor for deciding the war is absent. The Iraqi soldiers, however, have the will to defend their homeland, and the Iraqi forces enjoy the factor of will. As I said, oil, and not the homeland, is the goal of the American soldiers.

Assessing the allied forces, Gen. Filatov said: The information we have confirms that the Americans and the allied forces had planned only a three-day war and one military operation. In light of this, they supplied themselves with equipment, weapons, and fuel. But, he added, they are using seven times as much as they had planned.

The use of B-52's indicates the failure of the American and allied forces and their modern weapons and missiles because the use of this type of plane indicates that they ran out of their reserves of weapons and missiles. In the view of military theory and the Soviet Armed Forces General Staff, we can say that the allied forces lack the will to decide the war.

The use of such planes, he added, has turned the war into an ugly and inhuman war because these planes destroy large areas without distinguishing targets and kill large numbers of people. This, he said, is an ugly and inhuman war.

Oil Ministry Issues Statement on Liquid Gas Use

NC2202135491 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 18 Feb 91 p 4

[Text] The Oil Ministry has issued a statement warning citizens of the dangers of using the liquified gas in gas cylinders as automobile fuel. The following is the text of the statement:

Statement issued by the Oil Ministry to the esteemed citizens:

We have noticed that some citizens are removing the valves from liquid gas cylinders to use the liquified gas in these cylinders as automobile fuel. Such actions are very dangerous to citizens and damage cars engines as well as the gas cylinders themselves. This endangers the lives of other citizens when the cylinders are refilled with liquid gas. Therefore, we appeal to all citizens to stop such actions in the interest of public welfare.

[Signed] The Oil Ministry

'Source' Ridicules Saudi Commander's Statements

NC2202175091 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1616 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] A responsible source at the Culture and Information Ministry today ridiculed the statements made by the so-called Khalid Bin-Sultan, commander of the so-called the joint forces in Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia], in which he said that Iraq has lost 40 percent of its ground troops.

In his statement to the IRAQ NEWS AGENCY [INA], the source said: The reality of this clown, and his American and Zionist masters, is that he does not know anything—not even about the operations of his troops, which follow the orders of the Americans and Zionists.

The source added: We challenge the so-called Khalid, who is also considered responsible for the theater of operations, to verify if he has seen or participated in any military operation. We know he does not have anything to do with soldiery, but is only known for his hobbies and vices.

The source stressed that Iraq's glorious Army, which holds the banner of God is great, is staying put in its positions, deterring the evil of the evildoers, and repelling evil with hands of steel that resist any movement against the sectors of our glorious army, which have a great history.

The source concluded his statement to INA by saying: Khalid and his ilk only repeat after their masters. They also voice wishes which they will not be able to attain, and which only exist in their sick minds. The steadfastness of Iraq's soldiers on its borders, and the resolve of their victorious leader, Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, will be the gate to the clear victory, God willing.

Biological Weapons Plant Said Under Construction

PM2202121791 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 19 Feb 91 p 1

[Unattributed report: "It Is Said"]

[Text] It is said that four experts from the South Korean "Sangyong" company are supervising the construction of secret buildings in the orchards [basatin] of Jadidat al-Shatt village, on the Tigris between Baghdad and al-Khalis, suitable for use as a plant for producing biological weapons. It is also said that the only plant for producing that weapon, located in the Salman Pak area east of the capital, has been completely destroyed and what is left of it moved to a building in Ba'qubah.

Iranian Reporters View Al-Najaf Damage

LD2002185591 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] The group of reporters dispatched by the Islamic Republic of Iran's Voice and Vision [radio and TV] to Iraq has produced a report on the situation in the immaculate city of Najaf. I invite you to watch that report:

[Begin recording] The immaculate city of al-Najaf, the city of the lord of the monotheists and the cousin of the honorable messenger of Islam, his holiness Imam 'Ali Ibn-Abi Talib, peace be upon him, has witnessed the first visit in many years by a delegation of Iranian reporters.

The people of Najaf, who were informed of the presence of their Iranian brothers, gathered around us and expressed their interest and satisfaction toward the Muslim people of Iran and the improvement of relations between the two neighboring countries of Iran and Iraq.

This holy city, which has maintained its religious structure and sanctity, has been seen as a safe haven by people from various parts of Iraq since the outbreak of the war in the Persian Gulf. But surprisingly this religious and sacred city has not been safe from Western forces' missile and aerial attacks.

We saw ruined houses during a visit to the bombarded residential areas in the region of (Hayy al-Amir). [video shows a number of collapsed houses] The governor of al-Najaf told visiting reporters that 17 inhabitants of (Hayy al-Amir) were killed and dozens of residential units sustained major damage. He added: The region of Bahr al-Najaf, which is not far from the immaculate shrine of His Holiness 'Ali—peace be upon him—was not safe from aerial attacks, and as the result of the bombing, four shepherds, who were owners of residential units, lost their lives. [end recording]

IRNA Reports Allied Bombardment, Damage

'60 Percent' of People Flee Basra

LD2202182191 Tehran IRNA in English 1702 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Ahvaz, Khuzestan Prov., Feb. 22, IRNA—The constant bombings of Basra by the U.S.-Allied aircraft has forced 60 percent of the people of the Iraqi port city to flee their homes. Those remaining in the city, mainly women and children, are suffering from undesirable hygienic and medical conditions.

People coming to Iran from Basra these days report that the contamination of the drinking water and non-observance of hygiene in Iraq's southern cities has caused the spread of infectious deseases particularly diarrhea and vomiting in children.

Ahmad Nosrat Hosayn, 27 from the Iraqi town of al-Tannumah, says U.S. air raids and missile attacks have inflicted heavy damage on Basra, destroying bridges as well as administrative and industrial centers.

He says he has personally witnessed the massacre of many civilians in Basra, including all members of three families totalling 18 people.

Abd-al-Jabar Hosayn 'Ali, 42, says he has seen the mutiliation of several women and children in the bombings of Basra.

Hosayn Mansur, 37 from Zobaydat [placename as received], told IRNA that he had witnessed the bombing and destruction of several civilian quarters by the U.S.-led forces in his hometown.

He described the situation in Iraq as critical and said if the situation continued many people would lose their lives as a result of lack of hygiene, hunger and psychological pressures.

The persons interviewed by IRNA arrived in Iran over the past few days through the southern borders by using the darkness.

Region Covered in 'Black Smoke'

LD2302100191 Tehran IRNA in English 0904 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Ahvaz, Khuzestan Prov., Feb. 23 IRNA—Moments after a powerful explosion shook Dasht-e Azadegan area in this southern province at 0600 GMT Saturday, the sky in the region was covered with a thick black smoke billowing from a distance of 20 kms inside Iraq.

The explosion and smoke seem to have been caused by a missile attack on Iraq's al-'Amarah city or its surrounding areas.

'Heavy' Attacks on Basra 23 Feb

LD2402071191 Tehran IRNA in English 0655 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Ahvaz, Khuzestan Prov., Feb. 24, IRNA—Southern cities of Iraq were under heavy missile and air attacks of the U.S.-led allied forces overnight Saturday [23 February].

The attacks resumed at 18:30 GMT Saturday and continued till 02:45 GMT Sunday and subsided afterwards.

Overnight Saturday sound of explosions could be heard every ten minutes in Abadan and Khorramshahr in this southern province neighbouring Iraqi soutehrn port city of Basra.

Rocket Attack on Baghdad 24 Feb

LD2402094491 Tehran IRNA in English 0940 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, Feb. 24 IRNA—The Iraqi capital was hit by rockets fired from the invading planes of the U.S. and its allies at 0915 GMT Sunday.

Minutes after alert siren went off here four rockets hit the city immediately after which the sky was covered with black smoke.

U.S. Air Raids on Baghdad, Other Towns Reported

LD2402153191 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1500 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, the capital of Iraq, came under attack this evening from U.S. and allied fighter planes. According to the IRNA reporter in Baghdad, following the sound of air raid sirens, the city of Baghdad was the target of four missiles [as heard] from U.S. fighter planes. Afterwards, the smoke rising from explosions covered the sky over Baghdad.

The report states: Basra and other southern Iraqi towns were bombed this afternoon. The roar of fighter planes could be heard in the Shalamcheh border region, and the awful sound of the explosion of installations and buildings in Basra was heard in Khorramshahr. [passage omitted]

WHO Reports Epidemic Threat, Health Conditions

AU2302184691 Paris AFP in English 1756 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Geneva, Feb 23 (AFP)—There is a growing threat of cholera and other epidemics breaking out in Iraq, World Health Organization (WHO) officials said here Saturday on a return from Baghdad.

The number of children with diarrhea and acute respiratory problems had jumped fourfold, as the war put them and their mothers under severe stress, said Ali Khogali, one of the officials who visited Iraq.

There was an urgent need to set up a network to alert doctors to possible outbreaks of disease and prevent epidemics, according to the officials.

"One of the major problems is the question of safe water and sanitation", Dr. Khogali said, adding that his group had seen people in Baghdad taking "water from the Tigris (river) and canals."

Government broadcasts on radio were advising residents to boil water, he said, "but there is a great shortage of fuel".

Meanwhile the amount of food people were getting had fallen below the minimum daily caloric intake necessary, as determined by WHO, said another member of the group, Anneke Verster.

"We have not seen any cases of malnutrition but this possibility should be borne in mind", Dr. Verster said.

Stocks of medicine had dropped to one-sixth of the level that existed before the U.N. imposed a trade embargo against Iraq because of its invasion of Kuwait.

The mission visited two hospitals, one in Baghdad and the other just outside the capital. Neither facility had electricity, water or medicines, and few patients were being admitted, the officials said.

At the Baghdad hospital, they saw children with leukemia said to be dying for lack of medicine.

They saw no wounded people and the hospitals were far from full. Most doctors were unable to get to work because of disrupted transportation, the officials said.

The group was part of a joint mission formed by WHO and the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) that entered Iraq February 16 with 54 tonnes of medical equipment.

They spent a week evaluating conditions in and around the capital and were now drawing up a report recommending action to alleviate the situation.

Medicine, Food Said in Short Supply

LD2402110991 Tehran IRNA in English 1032 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, Feb. 24 IRNA—More than 5,000 women, children and elderly people have died in various Iraqi hospitals due to shortage of medicines and medical facilities since the outbreak of the Persian Gulf war on January 17, said head of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society Ibrahim Nouri here Sunday.

Speaking to IRNA correspondent, he said that cholera and diarrhea are becoming epidemic in Iraq due to shortage of drinkable water which has prompted the public to drink Tigris River water.

Referring to Iran's pledge to donate 1,200 tons of medical supplies and foodstuff to Iraq, he said that Iranian supplies are being sent to Iraq through the International

Community [as received] of the Red Cross (ICRC). He called on Iranian officials not to spare any assistance to the Iraqi people.

Nouri said that among medicines and items which are in short supply are antibiotics, analgesic and spasmolytic drugs and serums as well as rice, sugar, wheat and tea.

Meanwhile, head of Iraqi physicians' syndicate, Dr. Razi 'Abbas al-Tikriti, told IRNA that about 17,000 physicians are active in various government, military and private hospitals throughout the country. He said that there was no need for Iranian physicians. However, he added, the Iraqi doctors can make use of experience and expertise of the Iranian physicians for which he said the Iraqi nation will be grateful.

Egyptian Soldiers Said 'Seized,' 'Surrendered'

NC2402143591 Paris AFP in English 1350 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Amman, Feb 24 (AFP)—Iraqi forces are repelling the allied land offensive on all fronts and have seized "a great number of Egyptian soldiers" who took part in the attack, the Iraqi army said Sunday. [passage omitted]

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) also said that Egyptian soldiers had "surrendered" to Iraqi troops as they pushed back a U.S. armoured assault "on the central front."

"A great number of them said they were ashamed and expressed their sorrow," INA said. [passage omitted]

UAE-Based Group Urges Striking U.S. Interests

NC2302105291 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0600 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] In a statement issued in Abu Dhabi yesterday, the Arab Youth Organization in the United Arab Emirates [UAE] condemns the aggressive war being waged by the American-Zionist-Atlantic alliance forces against Iraq. The statement notes that the aggressive forces have shown their disregard for all norms and human values, killing women and children and targeting residential areas after realizing that their evil intentions had been defeated by Iraq's valiant steadfastness. The statement calls for striking at the American-Atlantic interests in the Arab region and around the world to expand the confrontation front against the aggressors and their criminal leader Bush.

Antigovernment Protests in Egypt, Syria Reported

NC2302133291 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1033 GMT 23 Feb 91

[From "The Mother of Battles; Reactions and Views" program]

[Text] In Egypt, the land of Arabism, the heroic Egyptian people have shown that they are part of the Arab nation and will never abandon their Arab and Islamic commitments under any circumstances. The Egyptians proved that the treacherous policies of the regime's president, the lightweight Husni, do not represent the resolve of the Egyptian people but merely reflect the treachery of the treasonous leaders.

The date 18 February will always be marked as the day of Arab Egyptian anger, for it was on that day that the Egyptian masses Egypt took to the streets, demanding the withdrawal of the Egyptian forces from the trenches of the enemy, to (?join) the camp of the faithful.

The Egyptian crowds said that whoever joins hands with the Zionists cannot be defending the interests of the Arabs and Muslims and that the end of the traitors who have become (?despicable members of the heathen camp) is near.

Meanwhile, students at Cairo University organized a large demonstration to protest the aggression waged by America and its evil allies against the heroic Iraqi people.

Similar demonstrations were staged at the 'Ayn Shams and Asyut Universities, incurring the anger of the regime's president who ordered his (?security services) to storm the university campus and arrest a number of the students. Police forces are still deployed around the Cairo University campus.

In Syria, popular protests continue against the policies of the agent regime that has chosen to side with the heathen camp against the will of the Arab people. The demonstrators denounced the barbaric attack waged by the U.S.-Zionist-NATO forces against the Iraqi people. The agencies of oppression and terror of that regime attacked the demonstration and arrested more than 20 people for openly expressing their opposition to the aggression and refusing to remain silent.

Egypt, Syria Said To Propose Gulf Security Plan

NC2302201391 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] A diplomatic source has disclosed that during the recent Gulf states' meeting in Cairo, the Syrian and Egyptian regimes submitted a proposal that calls for drawing up a security plan for the region under the two regimes' auspices in return for an annual sum of $15 billion. The source, who asked not to be identified, told the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY that the Gulf states were not convinced about the proposal, but they could not reject it publicly, except for the Sultanate of Oman.

The source added that the Egyptian and Syrian regimes set a condition to the effect that no foreign state should be involved in the new security order so as to obtain the lion's share of the amount. The source affirmed that the Gulf states rejected the last proposal as well and insisted

on including the United States and involving it effectively in any security arrangements. The source pointed out that the differences prompted the postponement of the meeting until 4 March in Damascus.

No political statement was issued at the end of the meeting except for the press statements. The source said that the postponement of the meeting is meant to provide an opportunity to convince the Egyptian and Syrian regimes to accept the United States after tempting them with money. The source added that the finance ministers of the Gulf states, Egypt, and Syria will attend the upcoming meeting.

Appeal Issued to Arabs To Join 'Decisive Battle'

NC2402142191 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1313 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] O honorable Arabs, leaders and masses: The decisive battle has begun. Iraq is leading the faithful group in confronting the enemies of the Arabs and Muslims. O honorable people, this is your battle. It is the dividing line between the good and evil, between those who are in the ranks of the people and nation and those who are the enemies of the people and nation, between those who are with history and the future and those who are against history and the future. There is no room, O honorable Arabs, for hesitation in this battle, in this historic showdown. There is no room for confusion and illusion. The trenches are clear, and the honorable Arab knows where his trench is.

Come, O honorable ones, to the trench of faith and join its ranks without hesitation. Together we will hit the enemies of the nation, the enemies of history, and the enemies of humanity. Destroy their interests wherever they may be. And slay them wherever ye catch them. [Koranic verse] Be true Arabs. Be deserving of the honor of belonging to this nation, the great nation. Wage with us this historic, decisive battle, and do not miss the honor of seriously participating in it.

We say: Do not hesitate, do not hesitate, do not hesitate. Look how we are fighting. Look how we are fighting the armies of 30 states without being terrified or deterred. Look how we are confronting them and all their weapons as more than equal opponents. Come on, O honorable Arabs, come on. The trench of faith, the trench of the victorious is awaiting you. It is awaiting more than demonstrations, sit-ins, and protests. The trench of faith is awaiting serious direct action. The trench of the faithful and faith is waiting for you to be true Arabs, as God and his prophet wanted you to be. God is great.

AL-THAWRAH Praises Saddam's Leadership

NC2302001691 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1208 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Dear brothers. Under the headline "The Towering Symbol," AL-THAWRAH publishes the following editorial in today's issue:

There are certainly tangible differences between the ruler and the leader and between the leader and the symbol leader. The first is created by events and is led by circumstances and normal situations to positions of rule. The second creates events and leads circumstances according to policies he sets out and [word indistinct] to reach the position of leadership, which in many cases becomes an end in itself. The third [as heard] creates events and circumstances which, through accumulation, lead to the creation of history according to concepts, ideas, and dreams that prevail in the conscience of his people and which he has carried in his heart, mind, and conscience from his early years and throughout the phases of struggle until reaching the position of leadership, which immediately becomes a tool for implementing all those concepts, ideas, and dreams from the position of leadership. These concepts, ideas, and dreams are not subjective [zhatiyyatan] in all circumstances and conditions but are a reflection of the people's ambitions, the nation's hopes, and its broad masses' objectives.

From his early youth, as his biography—which is full of courage, challenges, dangers, and jihad—says, Saddam Husayn was no more than that citizen human being who not only carried the dreams of one whole generation but the nation's hopes, ambitions, and dreams of a bright day and a dignified and great future that pervaded his body and flowed in his veins like blood. He was a unique struggler and a firm and bold mujahid whose chest was full of limitless and endless faith that, in this great nation, there are resources and capabilities, including the heroic Iraqi people, which, if discovered and exploited would enable it to attain its desired aims and noble objectives so it could occupy its deserved position in the international family and practice its fitting, shining, and humanitarian role.

Saddam Husayn has remained a citizen and a human being while turning Iraq into a citadel of honest principles and values, a center of freedom and (?legitimacy), a rule of dignity, and a great hope in this glorious nation's great hopes of liberation, freedom, dignity, and construction. That was not possible through traditional calculations or the prevailing measures but was made possible through extraordinary revolutionary calculations and correct and wise measures—in addition to boldness, challenge, endurance, patience, perseverance, [word indistinct], determination, and an exemplary model—leading up to the image of the symbol that embodies the nation's brightest, most radiant, and lively image: The leader Saddam Husayn.

Thus, leadership and its position were not among the calculations of leader symbol Saddam Husayn, nor were they in his conscience, heart, and visions except as one of the means to serve the nation and the people and to build a strong, impregnable, noble, and towering homeland that strongly [words indistinct] the difficulties, that deservedly stands fast against the raging winds, and valiantly challenges the howling storms. Thus great Iraq, its characteristics, criteria, attributes, and edifice were identical to the hopes of the Arab people from the Gulf to the ocean, to the ambitions and hopes of the masses and great multitudes of the nation and their desire for impregnability, strength, and confrontation of challenges.

Iraq's great leader was the Arab masses' towering symbol—of whom they are proud, to whom they relate, and with whom they become filled with a sense of dignity, freedom, pride, a feeling of strength, and the ability to challenge the enemies, confront them, smash their arrogance, and inflict defeat on them. Even if Saddam Husayn had been no more than this, it would have been enough for this noble nation, its struggling masses, and all its free, honest, and noble sons to have the honor of belonging to his principles and of being proud of him.

But Saddam Husayn—the faithful mujahid; the just man; the unique leader who is making history and building for his people and nation glory, pride, and all that preserves its dignity and humanity; the strong fighter against injustice, tyranny, exploitation, arrogance, slavery, and all forces of evil that are trying to rob the freeborn human being of everything that maintains his honor, dignity, freedom, and humanity—has become a symbol for every honest Muslim, for everyone struggling for freedom and goodness, for everyone who believes in justice, fairness, and in all that is legal and legitimate.

The road to this was neither easy nor smooth but was full of dangers, challenges, and sacrifices. Had this road been otherwise, then it would not have been Saddam Husayn's road or the path he walked with complete faith, confidence, and ability until it became a path for all free Arabs, Muslims, and all honest people on this earth. Because Saddam Husayn is all of this, he has become the target of the forces of evil, darkness, and tyranny, because Iraq—under whom it (?prospered), with whom it erected the edifice, and by whom it achieved impregnability, glory, and might—has not only become the strong organ in the Arab nation's body that gives it vitality, rejuvenation, and strength but has become (?implanted) in the body of the free and honest world that believes in faith and justice, that world that is moved by principles, values, and noble ambitions as well as by the concepts of freedom, honor, dignity, and sovereignty.

[Words indistinct] of this towering symbol and because great Iraq is the homeland of freedom, justice, and right, and the homeland of defense against injustice, tyranny, and the law of the jungle, it has become the target for the perfidy of traitors and their barbaric aggression. They rallied against it from all corners of the world. They have not learned and will not learn—because ignorance and hatred have blinded them—that great Iraq has grown up and that symbol leader Saddam Husayn is leading it, with God's help, from one victory to another, that it will be lying in wait for them, and that it, together with the faithful gathering that includes the free and noble Arabs, all Muslims who have true faith, and all those who love freedom, justice, and brotherhood, will be capable of inflicting certain defeat on the (?infidel) gathering.

O symbol leader: We are fighting with you because we are firmly convinced—now that you have become the symbol of this nation and this faithful gathering of free Muslims and peoples as you challenge the mightiest symbols of fascism and racism and the mightiest forces of tyranny, evil, corruption, and darkness—that you will be the victor by the grace of God, victor by right, and the conqueror of injustice and evil. Your history and that of your forefathers overflows with glories and heroism. The chapters in the history of the evil and prodigal gathering overflow with shame and humiliation. The chapters of your history and that of your forefathers are replete with glory, honor, chivalry, and jihad for justice and right. Their history and that of their forefathers is replete with deception, treachery, vileness, and injustice. Your history is a unique embodiment of the values of manhood, heroism, and courage. Their history is an embodiment of cowardice, weakness, and failure. Your jihad is encompassed by God's protection and support and by the jihad of your patient, steadfast, and heroic people. Let them (?rub) their rotten heads in the mire of shame and defeat. We will record for this nation its greatest victory in its modern history.

Public 'Unconcerned' About Bush's Ultimatum

NC2302194791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Feb 91

[From the "Comments on News" program]

[Text] Great Iraq knows well the background of the new ultimatum launched by Bush, Hitler of the 20th century. Iraq is fully aware of the meaning of this miserable ultimatum, which introduces nothing new nor contains any surprise. This is especially true as the entire world still remembers the series of former U.S. ultimatums issued since early last year. These ultimatums carried various forms of aggressive provocations and threats against rising Iraq.

Therefore, Iraq is not to be surprised by this quixotic ultimatum, because it has heard many such theatrical ultimatums and because Iraq is basically launching a defensive war against the largest and fiercest U.S.-Zionist aggression in which 30 international parties are taking part. This aggression has been going on for days and weeks. Therefore, Bush's leaning against his new ultimatum will be of no use to him and will not change the results that have taken place so far. More precisely,

Iraq will remain strong, steadfast, and balanced in its political and military positions alike. However, this Bush and his barbaric alliance will remain shaken to the core, because it is clear he has been surprised by Iraq's steadfastness during all these months and its advanced means, of which only a portion has been used and a great, great deal still maintained.

This is not groundless talk. It is based on Bush's spoken anxiety as a result of the Iraqi missile strikes, for example. It is also based on the growing concern inside the heart of this lowly criminal about the losses that his hostile alliance may sustain, after having tried his luck with a number of our heroic Armed Forces units in the southern sector of operations. He discovered that the Iraqi fighters are fully prepared for a land war and are completely alert to any attempt by the mercenaries of the satanic, evil Bush alliance.

Failing Bush should have considered the unpleasant results awaiting his alliance instead of launching this miserable ultimatum. The Iraqis find themselves unconcerned about such ridiculous theatrical acts. They are certain of their victory and of the defeat of the forces of this mean alliance. Iraq is fully aware of all wicked intentions and of the ignoble, rancorous purposes of this alliance. The Iraqis now have a clear image of the truth of Bush and his allies which confirms the extent of their rancor against new Iraq and the founder of this new Iraq and the builder of the pillars of its strength—leader mujahid President Saddam Husayn. This fact also affirms that this great Iraq is worthy of pride, loftiness, and clear victory. Iraq has endured the 30 parties' injustice, lowliness, and savagery, and not only their insolent ultimatums and repeated, disgusting threats.

Displaying more stupidity, Bush is letting out the evil inside him, as well as his insignificance and retarded mentality. All of this has led Bush to the impasse of the aggression against Iraq and the crimes he and his allies have committed. Further, he has been led into the impasse of undermining America's reputation and pushing its status as a superpower to rock bottom.

We say this will be reduced to ashes when the soldiers of leader Saddam Husayn achieve further decisive victories over these criminal rascals up to the clear victory that God has promised them in the decisive mother of battles.

Paper Says Country To Remain 'Target'

NC2202115191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0950 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 22 Feb (INA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH warns against illusions by the parties to the alliance of infidelity and evil that the mother of battles, which great Iraq chose relying on its material and moral capabilities and its strong, experienced, and guaranteed means, will make Iraq an easy prey for them.

In today's editorial, the paper stresses that the enemy's crimes as well as its threats will not make Iraq bend its tall and lofty frame in the face of the mighty winds. This is because what those riffraff had done came as no surprise to great Iraq, and at the same time the enemy will be punished for each and every crime it committed against Iraq's sons and innnocent citizens. Any of the coming chapters in this confrontation will mark a victory for Iraq and will break the back of those allied to inflict evil and harm against its national, pan-Arab, humane, noble, and genuine will.

The paper adds that Iraq will remain a target for the colonialist, imperialist, and Zionist forces, because the ambitions drawn by its unique leader Saddam Husayn go far beyond the red, green, and yellow lines placed by the enemies of the peoples who seek hegemony and want to impose their evil will on them.

The paper notes that the imperialist and Zionist quarters, along with their reactionary agents, having ascertained that Iraq was not much affected by the attempts to hamper its march as well as its efforts to firmly establish the elements for its sovereignty and stability, they themselves exposed their hidden evil intentions toward Iraq and the Arab nation. This is particularly so after new Iraq had begun to occupy an outstanding position among the countries of the region and within the Arab homeland. However, this position is harmful to the designs of these quarters and their known intentions.

Commentary Stresses Nation Ready for Peace, War

NC2202130091 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0907 GMT 22 Feb 91

[From "Comments on the News" program]

[Excerpts] Dear brothers, Iraq has continuously hoisted the banner of peace alongside the sword, and alongside power and capability it has maintained the spirit of political initiative, forgiveness and cooperation, and exploitation of all available means before resorting to force.

This method of dealing with crises and problems has a firm course because it stems from its Arab and Islamic principles and morals, as is said in the koranic verse "But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace." [Koranic verse]

For this reason, Iraq has always stamped out injustice with justice and has always provided good arguments for peace instead of war and aggression. If the aggressor side responds, then so be it. If it becomes more headstrong and continues with its aggressive stand, Iraq would nevertheless be ready to deter the aggressor and preserve peace.

Today, Iraq views peace once again after waging the first round of the historic battle with legendary steadfastness and firm insistence on the stand of justice and right,

because in this way it would be pursuing its march and policy which expresses the great course of historic responsibility.

The peace initiative proposed by Iraq has shaken the goal of the enemies as expressed by leader President Saddam Husayn in his important message delivered on Thursday [21 February]. This speech shook [words indistinct] and denuded their cunning intentions of targetting Iraq's people and territory. It also clearly revealed the goals of the aggressive alliance which have been planned for for years and which went into the stage of actual implementation during the first months of last year. It reached its climax during the five months which preceded what they call the Gulf crisis; that is March, April, May, June, and July.

The Western media machine, along with its huge and multisided networks and [word indistinct] which control the minds and memories of international public opinion, have tried constantly to hide reality, change facts, and draw a completely different scenario of what actually happened, so that it would seem to public opinion as though Iraq has not been exposed to an aggressive plot which went into the stage of actual implementation by using direct and armed military force against it before the events of 2 August last year.

The American-Zionist-Western media machine quickly wrapped up all events and prepared scenarios against Iraq that preceded last August. Therefore, they intentionally forgot the scheme to ban the exportation of grain to Iraq, the schemes of the defunct Zionist spy Bazoft, the plot of the supergun, the capacitors scenario, and many more, some of which are, most importantly the Zionist-U.S. threats on the need to deal Iraq a heavy military blow. [passage omitted]

Today, while Iraq announces its readiness for peace, as it did previously, it keeps its finger on the trigger in defense and readiness to break the necks of the aggressive invaders since one cannot trust, depend on, or go by the promises of the oppressive invaders.

Iraq will remain proud on its territory and strong [word indistinct]. It shall continue to be a towering fortress before which the heads of all aggressors will topple. The evil invaders will leave dragging their tails of disappointment and loss behind them.

'Aggressors' Warned of Coming Destruction

NC2302085191 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0414 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen: The U.S. Administration has received no lack of warnings from reputable military experts about the consequences of a land offensive. Not a few American military experts, including field commanders on the ground of Najd and Hejaz, have acknowledged that Iraq's Armed Forces and ground defenses will be a match for an allied offensive. And yet, American media are now portraying a postponement of the ground action as if it were a gain for Iraq. Our confidence in ourselves, in the valor of our fighters and their field experience, and in our in our weapons, is such that we know that any land offensive launched by the aggressors will only meet with failure. The limited military operations by the allied forces in the al-Mansur sector have shown them incapable of mounting a land battle without being routed, and this much they have admitted. If this was the result of a restricted action, the allied forces, disadvantaged by the lack of a common language, uniform training tactics, and other drawbacks, will surely fare no better in an all-out war. Can such forces hold out against the Iraqi Army with its advantages of fighting on its own soil, under a monolithic leadership, and with uniform training tactics, not to mention its long experience in the land war?

We have often enough warned that once the duel begins, Iraq's firepower will not be able to distinguish between one aggressor and another. The aggressors will have to be mindful of this fact. Thus we would tell them: Beware of being tricked by the media; total destruction awaits you. As for us in Iraq, we will not be swayed by this psychological war. We know that we have no vulnerable points. If the heroic al-Mansur forces have beaten back the British incursion, as the British themselves have admitted, the allied forces will in the future have to acknowledge further reverses.

Commentary Vows 'Devastating,' 'Merciless' Revenge

NC2302093491 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0702 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Unattributed commentary: "Iraq—Great Because of Its People and Principles"]

[Excerpts] We do not think that we need proof and evidence to demonstrate that the American-Zionist-Atlantic plot is not confined to destroying Iraq, its scientific progress, and its national, pan-Arab, and humanitarian strength. This plot is aimed at dismembering the Arab nation and disintegrating its ranks in a way that would take it back to the age of darkness, backwardness, and suppression. [passage omitted]

Under its historic leadership, Iraq has chosen the path of freedom and dignity. It is prepared to thwart the evil onslaught which is being implemented by the unjust land forces under U.S. leadership. Iraq has also prepared itself to inflict harsh punishment on the criminals and the corrupt, and treacherous ones because of the grotesque crimes they perpetrated against the innocent Iraqi people. [passage omitted]

The states of the shameful alliance are witnessing blackmail, bribery, embezzlement, and pressure operations by America and others. The corrupt Arab oil shaykhs are taking disgusting stands, offering billions to the imperialists, Zionists, and those who follow in the path of humiliation and cowardice. These developments can

only be described as signs of a breakup in this alliance, which gathered around a dishonorable, cowardly aim—to destroy Iraq, its growing military power, and its enlightening effect on the Arab nation, the Islamic nation, and humanity.

Therefore, great and growing Iraq, thanks to the Iraqi people's steadfastness, perseverance, struggle, and faith in God and themselves, will present the world and humanity with a new world order, represented by justice, freedom, and honorable choice for every nation and people, without hegemony, domination, or aggression. Indeed, Iraq will bury the order of slavery and oppression which is expounded by America, the enemy of peoples and human freedom.

The brave Iraqis will not abandon this option. They will not hesitate to confront the gathering of infidelism and evil and to defeat them not only directly on the battlefield but also in all areas and places reached by the arms of the faithful and the mujahidin, the fedayeen of the gathering of the faithful. The countries of evil and aggression themselves, the countries of crimes, exploitation, immorality, and barbarism in the United States, Europe, and other dirty alliance states, will not be spared from the fedayeen attacks.

As for the great Iraqi mountain, it will not fear the American, Atlantic, or Zionist ravens. The missiles of American spite and savagery will not terrify the people of great Iraq. This Iraqi mountain will be further strengthened, and its struggle will not be affected by the criminals' destruction of Iraq's civilian installations and by the killing of Iraq's innocent civilians. We have no doubt that the Iraqi soldiers, the soldiers of the leader and symbol Saddam Husayn, are awaiting the land confrontation to inflict punishment on the armies of infidelism and crime. We have prepared ourselves for burning the bodies of the corrupt and evil invaders, and our revenge will be devastating and ruthless. This revenge will be merciless, merciless, merciless.

The great Iraqi mountain will continue to be great because of its people, leadership, and noble aims. God is great; victory for Iraq and the gathering of the faithful.

Commentary Attacks Bush, Warns of Coming 'Blow'

NC2302095591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0744 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Brothers, it is certain that all human history has never before seen a personality as criminal and full of hatred for humanity as the one controlling or governing the so-called first superpower in the world. Perhaps those who listened yesterday to the man called George Bush were affected by a mixture of disgust and ridicule for the character of this criminal for his character certainly combines both boyish contrariness and cowardly feeble-mindedness. Indeed, those people with a modicum of respect for every person created by God in this world have had this respect shaken while listening to the barking, shrieking, and hysterics of the president of the greatest country in the world.

He is making threats, promising retribution, determining, and speaking on behalf of the whole world, the UN Security Council, and the UN General Assembly itself. He is the father of international legitimacy, international law, the stick bearer, and the one capable of doing everything in order to accomplish a simple and worthless objective: that it might be said that Bush succeeded in burning the bridges of peace and confounding the efforts of others who make initiatives and who really want international legitimacy, international law, and justice to prevail and who want to avoid bloodshed.

Indeed, George Bush is a stupid, contrary boy. It would have been possible to overlook this except for the fact that this madman, who suffers from megalomania and the insanity of war destruction, and aggression, is the President of the United States. Because Bush does not see or hear and does not want to see or try to understand, it is time to make him hear the entire world's strong and free voice embodied in the truly heroic and manly acts of the troops of the victorious leader Saddam Husayn. This is so that he will understand, though only when it is too late, that boyishness and insanity lead to regret.

What the criminal Bush has so far done is an act of bullying with his ravens [aircraft] against peaceful women, old men, and children, houses, mosques, churches, pedestrian bridges, shepherds' flocks, and babies' milk. All this is meaningless as long as direct contact and engagement has not occurred between the faithful multitude's forces—the heroes of Mesopotamia, and the bearers of the banner of God is great—and his forces and cohorts and the cohorts of the small nonentities and henchmen who follow him.

Let him wait for what he chooses with his vacuous arrogance and vanity. If he persists in his error and arrogance and haughty, aggressive policy, the great, faithful blow will come with the shout of God is great that will make the entire universe tremble and rend the sky declaring the beginning of the end of the empire of evil and crime at the hands of its Nero whose name is George Bush.

Talk Stresses Nation's Desire for Peace

NC2302105191 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0832 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] We are advocates of peace; for Iraqis, Arabs, and Muslims, peace is a way of life. Our interest in peace underscores the high standard of our civilization and our lengthy history. War criminal Bush, however, seems to think that our inclination toward peace is the result of fear of his oppressive might. Shame on criminal Bush and whatever infidel and corrupt persons have aligned

themselves with him. We want peace because of our respect for human values, for ourselves, and for the human race, to which neither he nor his treasonous allies belongs. We have no respect for Bush, as we have no respect for corrupt, infidel, and criminal warmongers. War criminal Bush knows this full well and sees Iraq as a thorn in his side and a stalwart bulwark that can never be softened by the thousands of tons of bombs and rockets directed at the peaceful homes of Iraqis, where they kill women, children and elderly people whose only crime is their desire to lead decent and honorable lives free from the hegemony and domination he is out to impose on the world.

Our concept of peace is based on justice and fairness, a peace that will reinforce our freedom and the freedom of Arabs and Muslims. As for the war criminal's threats, these will fail to intimidate us. They will not even intimidate the smallest Iraqi child whose father is now repulsing a barbaric aggression against our valiant forces, who have been tested in the battles of honor, patience, and faith. Victory will only come from God, and God is great.

Commentary: Bush Delays Ground War, Fears Losses

NC2302123891 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0901 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Commentary from the "Comments on Events" program]

[Text] Gentlemen, the question keeping Bush awake at night because he cannot find a definite answer to it is: How can Iraq demonstrate this epic-like steadfastness in the face of the international alliance led by America? The other question that annoys Bush a good deal these days and that stems from the first is: How can Iraq be allowed to emerge sound and healthy from this war when war criminal Bush wanted it to be a devastating and all-devouring one?

Bush's advisers and staff are finding it difficult to provide convincing answers to these questions, and so he is coming up with belligerent or quixotic statements to suggest to others that he can impose his conditions on Iraq and that Iraq has embarked on its peaceful steps in response to the threats of this criminal, who has avoided the ground battle and instead continues striking at defenseless citizens.

Criminal Bush has forgotten that Iraq has always sought peace and that it was Iraq which suggested dialogue and negotiations and announced initiatives. He has also forgotten that Iraq accepted the challenge so that it could keep itself safe from the U.S. attempts to impose its tutelage and hegemony over it.

Bush, who deep down recognizes that he has suffered defeat, wants to suggest to the world that his forces and those of his allies have triumphed and that he can impose his terms. The whole world, however, knows who is the victor and who the vanquished. The army of believers led by Iraq has demonstrated an epic-like steadfastness in the face of the entire Western machine of destruction. Five weeks into the air and missile aggression, Iraq continues to fight with great determination and its sons continue to lead normal lives. After more than seven months of unjust siege and inhuman measures, Iraq is capable of continuing its steadfastness.

If criminal Bush wants to suggest that he will be able to terrify the sons of Iraq with the expected ground offensive, he is truly deluding himself. He has postponed his ground attack out of fear of the heavy losses his forces will sustain once the attack begins. Moreover, this ground offensive will be nipped in the bud, because the valiant men of Iraq stand ready to wipe out the aggression and destroy the enemy concentrations.

Let Bush, his allies, his friends, and his henchmen know that victory is the lot of the heroic Iraqis. With his lies and allegations, Bush can neither hide Iraq's victory nor undermine its steadfastness.

Shame on Bush and his aides. Victory is ours, God willing.

Talk 'Ridicules' Bush's Ultimatums

NC2302181791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1654 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] It seems that war criminal Bush, who has failed in achieving any military victory and has been successful only in staining his ugly face with the blood of innocent civilians, wants to score a shallow propaganda victory with which to justify the involvement of America, its evil allies, and its lowly agents in the aggression against Iraq.

Thus, he has put conditions and placed obstacles on the road toward restoring peace to the region and toward finding radical and just solutions for its problems. This criminal murderer has imagined that Iraq's response to the Soviet initiative was the outcome of his quixotic and failed ultimatums and his ridiculous threats, something that made him persist in his ultimatums, engulfing them with a ridiculous atmosphere of propaganda and thinking that they are scary or confusing. But they are more like cocks' crows, which Bush resembles in shape and manners.

Iraq [words indistinct] since the first moment criminal Bush has (?blackmailed) billions of dollars to [words indistinct] 30 countries ruled by murderers, agents, and betrayers. Iraq ridicules Bush's ultimatums and his impudent threats and boasts of its extraordinary ethical victory. It is fully ready to face the aggressors on the battlefront who have evaded a confrontation for more than five weeks and who are satisfied by cowardly strikes at civilian installations and the defenseless civilians.

Thus, let criminal Bush understand that Iraq does not respect him and does not fear the brute force that he has

(?assembled) from here and there. After its great people have stood fast in the face of the criminal and cowardly air bombardment and after its valiant Army has defended the homeland's borders in lofty [word indistinct] without the aggressors daring to approach it, !raq remains firmly determined to confront the aggressors should they continue their stubbornness and pursue their aggressive policy. It is capable, backed by the entire army of faith, of inflicting defeat upon them and rubbing their noses in the sands of the desert. God willing, we will be triumphant and disgrace the shameless.

Paper Says State Refuses To Accept Humiliation

NC2302130291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1030 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Feb (INA)—Responsibility for the raging war and the bloodletting falls squarely on shoulders of the vicious U.S.-led alliance. It was this alliance that sparked the war after having blocked all efforts to avert the outbreak of hostilities, AL-'IRAQ said in an editorial today.

Iraq has from the beginning approached peace on the basis of principles, never closing the door to any peace-seeking initiative. Its openness to peace is not compelled by circumstances, but is rather compatible with its guiding principles and a heightened sense of its national, pan-Arab, and humanitarian responsibilities, the paper asserted.

This is the line Iraq has maintained ever since the beginning of the so-called Gulf crisis, AL-'IRAQ went on, and it has never sought to obstruct any peace-seeking effort, convinced that world problems can only be addressed in an atmosphere of peace.

Iraq has consistently used responsible rhetoric even before the Gulf crisis erupted and has been receptive to all well-intentioned calls for peace, while at the same time it has remained alert to the enemy's suspect moves.

Although Iraq keeps the door open to all peace initiatives, the same does not apply to those dubious calls that seek only its capitulation. As much as Iraq will prove receptive to whatever promises to put out the fire and staunch the bloodletting, it refuses to accept humiliation and submission, AL-'IRAQ said.

Newspaper Says Peace Initiatives 'Genuine Pledge'

NC2302132291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1025 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Feb (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH has described Iraq's peaceful initiatives as a genuine pledge [wa'du haq] which are all aimed at preventing further suffering, tragedy, and disaster. AL-QADISIYAH, the organ of the Defense Ministry, says: By presenting a peaceful initiative to stop the American-Atlantic-Zionist aggression, Iraq has revealed the pretexts and false allegations which America and the evil ones who are standing with it tried to use as a cover to deceive some people and to continue the aggression targeted against Iraq and all it possesses.

The Iraqi newspaper affirms that with this step, Iraq has proven that its valiant Armed Forces together with its sons everywhere have challenged the enemies and protected the dear Iraqi land from the filth of the aggressors.

AL-QADISIYAH warns that if the enemies want to continue their adventures, a fire awaits them that will burn the aggressive invaders in their tens of thousands and achieve a splendid victory for great Iraq.

The paper recalls that Iraq has been the target of American-Zionist schemes since it began its development and cultural awakening. The paper says that America and its evil allies hatched their evil and filthy schemes before 2 August 1990 to strike at the Iraqi wall of justice and its faithful, honest bastion. They have committed one act of aggression after another and continue to plot against the firm Iraqi wall in all ways possible.

Newspaper on Difficulties To Clarify Stands

NC2302163291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1042 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Feb (INA)—AL-THAWRAH says that America and Zionism, and those who stand on their side—those from the Atlantic alliance and America's Arab slaves—have decided to harm Iraq and to isolate the real conflict raging between Iraq and Zionism and imperialism.

The paper, organ of the Ba'th Party, adds that Washington resorted to political deceptions and methods of blackmail and hypocricy by utilizing all of its influence and capabilities to launch an unjust propaganda war by mobilizing the media of over 30 nations. Iraq has had serious difficulties in explaining its viewpoints, stands, and all related facts, especially the fact that what happened on 2 August, despite the clarity of its historical right [Istihqaq]. This is basically not a cause in the conflict between Iraq, the citadel of faith and honest aspirations, and Zionism and American imperialism. The events of the conflict is one of the results of the battle and conflict that preceded 2 August.

The paper notes that among the difficulties Iraq faced in underlining the facts, divorced from the will of Washington and Tel Aviv, and based on the historical background of Kuwait's relationship with Iraq, is the mounting prejudices against Iraq and the Arabs in general—prejudices of the politicians in the West and the Zionist influences on them, in addition to the Arab traitors' falling all over themselves to come to complete harmony with America.

The paper says, however, the facts which the Bush administration concealed by its deceptions and propaganda clamor were soon exposed by the American-Atlantic-Zionist aggression against Iraq. Especially

exposed were all the American-Zionist premeditated evil goals and intentions against Iraq. Concluding, the paper says that this is what motivates the aggressor invaders to continue their aggressive war against Iraq and the Iraqi people now that they have gone beyond their deceptive slogans.

Radio Talk Urges Troops To Repulse 'Invaders'

NC2402064591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0634 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Talk] God's peace be with you, valiant men of Iraq. God's peace be with you, O soldiers of God. God's peace be with you as you plunge into war, defend the homeland's borders, and drive evil and the evils ones away from your country. God's peace be with you as you confront the infidel scoundrels. God's peace be with you O men of Iraq, heroic fighters, troops of the Almighty. Fight them O men, and kill them mercilessly. Kill them in defense of Iraq, the nation, history, and all noble and honorable values. Fight them O mujahidin in the cause of God and God's religion. Do not permit the criminal invaders to step on your sacred land. Fight them and prove to them that Iraq is the land of heroism, honor, pride. Fight them, God is with you. Fight them, right is with you. Victory will be yours, God willing.

Talk Urges Troops To Hit 'Mercenary' Forces

NC2402071091 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0640 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] This is then what the perfidious want. This is then what the criminal butcher Bush wants. He wants a war to the end. He does not want peace and for bloodshed to be spared.

O soldiers of God: Teach him that Iraq is a lofty mountain that cannot be harmed. Teach his mercenary soldiers a lesson in courage and heroism and how honor and dignity are defended. Teach them how men stand fast and and how men fight. Hit them forcibly; strike them mercilessly. Score victory for your religion, homeland, and honor.

Radio Tells Fighters 'This Is Your Great Day'

NC2402084891 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0524 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] O brother mujahidin, O valiant fighters in our glorious Armed Forces, O bearers of the flag and servants of the cause, you embody all the glories of the Arab nation and are entrusted with safeguarding the sacred land and the precious homeland.

O sons of [Caliph] 'Umar, [Caliph] 'Ali, Husayn [son of Caliph 'Ali], Khalid [Muslim military leader], [Muslim military leader] al-Qa'qa', and Saddam Husayn, you are now fighting the most honorable of battles and becoming the authors of the most glorious triumphs against the alliance of such evil and aggression as has never been known in the history of wars.

This is your great day. Tell the Americans, their Zionist allies, and their little agents that Iraq is not part of anyone's (?plan) and that the men of Iraq are not the type that submit to threats and intimidation. The Iraqi Army has been prepared for just such a day, a day that the history of war has never known before.

O heroes, the entire world is riveted to your great deeds and is following your courageous strikes that you constantly direct at the enemies of God and humanity.

Have you seen how the criminal and coward Bush wants to impose his humiliating terms on your people? Have you seen how the criminals want to humiliate your homeland and shackle your free will and independence?

Tell them that this is Iraq, a country like no other. Say to them: You are dreaming, you bastards. The people who have once faced the invading British Army with nothing but rifles and hatchets are now capable of confronting the heathen armies with deadly weapons that was created by the Iraqis who love their homeland and trust in God and the justice of their cause.

Yesterday you defeated the attempts by the units of old Britain to engage you in fighting. Today you are hitting twice as hard at their new attempts to engage our heroic forces. Yes, our valiant men, you are a match for them. By God, you are capable of dragging their arrogance and empty conceit in the mud of defeat. You, yes you, are the ones who will turn the bragging and threats of God's enemy Bush into a shame and dishonor that will tarnish his image and the image of his aggressive forces forever.

Slogan: 'Sweet Is Victory With the Help of God'

NC2402113391 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1009 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Sweet is victory with the help of God. This, our brother heroes, is our slogan in the mother of battles. This is our goal and objective in our confrontation with the alliance of evildoers who want to humiliate our homeland and subjugate our people. Yes, our mujahidin, there is no word on our lips sweeter than that of (?victory). This will be a song for our people and Army, as it has been uttered by our leader Saddam Husayn. The great epic has begun, and the cowardly armies of America and its allies are fleeing in panic because of the (?fierce) strikes directed at them by the soldiers of righteousness and the bearers of the God-is-great banner in the Iraqi Army.

The cowards are holding back news of their casualties and are failing to inform their nations about losses of life—let alone the loss of face—they have incurred as a

result of their aggression. This is evidence that they have taken their first step to defeat, a defeat that you will make final in the near future, God willing. Soon everyone will be shouting the very words of the great leader Saddam Husayn: Sweet is victory with the help of God. These are words that will echo in heaven as omens of unmistakable conquest and assured victory.

'Death With Dignity' Preferable to 'Humiliation'

NC2402134091 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1037 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] O valiant Iraqi fighters: Your vanguards are crushing the heads of the evil invaders who have abused all human values and disregarded all the good efforts contained in Iraq's peace initiatives, along with those that were made by the good people in the world. They have launched their treacherous ground attack at a time when the entire world was looking for peace. Crush them because, by God, they deserve nothing but to be crushed and to die. Deal them the ultimate blow. Their examples do not deserve to live. Do not have mercy or pity them.

O glorious men: Teach the invaders the lessons they deserve. Let your onslaught show them that your courage and valiance have no match and that the midget aggressor cannot rise to the level of your courage. Let them know that you, the Iraqis, are the children of your mothers and fathers, who do not stand for injustice and who would rather die than have your dignity and the honor of your women defiled.

Death with dignity and honor is more honorable for you than it is to live in humiliation. Far be it from you that the sons of the Tigris and Euphrates would retreat before a foreign aggressor scoundrel or one of the vile slaves of the foreigners. May all of them be spurned. They know who the Iraqi fighter is—the hero they hesitated to confront and avoided facing in the battlefield throughout the past months. Had the reason for delaying the ground battle been the peace efforts, they would have accepted the latest Soviet initiative which Iraq has accepted. They have been determined to continue the war from the beginning. But you, O valiant fighters, have been the major obstacle preventing them from attaining their evil goals. Fight them and God will torment them at your hands. The hour of severe reckoning has struck and the scoundrel aggressors will pay the price of their aggression, haughtiness, and disregard for human values. God is great; God is great. Victory is for struggling and patient Iraq, with God's grace.

Talk Urges Fellow Arabs To Contribute to Battle

NC2402145891 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1246 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] O brother Arabs, O glorious ones throughout the Arab territories: Now that the awaited ground war has begun, the great duel has gone an important way on its course to victory, of defeating the conspiracy, and of burying the infidel and evil enemies.

Now, brother Arabs, in these fateful days in the history of the Arab nation, your brothers the sons of Iraq, both within the people and the Armed Forces, are in a position of glory and pride that is seldom seen in history, revealing the fate of the people and the nation in defense of its existence, its role, and the future of its coming generations. They are fighting the infidel enemies, as the Arabs fought the gathering of infidelity and atheism at the dawn of the message [of Islam]. God willing, they will triumph, repulse the aggression, and achieve the victory promised by God for them and for all the believers.

O Arabs: Your turn has come, the appropriate moment has come for each of you to contribute to and participate in the mother of battles and to help win the victory that is approaching, with God's help. O free and honest men within the Arab nation: Rise as one and stand in the nation's trench, the trench of faith, alongside the struggling Iraq under the banner of God is great.

Talk Decries 'Traitor' Egyptian 'Brother'

NC2402153591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1417 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] O sons of Arabism in beloved Egypt. O blood of Iraq that flows in your veins in love, affiliation, and brotherhood which no ruler can staunch regardless of how disrespectful he becomes. O right of Iraq which is yours. O we who drink the waters of the Nile when you drink it. O we who starve when you starve and suffer when you suffer. O we in Egypt which is ours as much as it is yours. Have you heard the painful news? Has the lowly [Mubarak] told you that he sent part of the Egyptian forces with the U.S. armored corps, which made failed attempts to advance toward the Iraqi 14th Division? In what way will the lowly tell you about a crime where the aggressor and the aggressed upon have the same blood and where the killer and the one killed have the same blood, Arab blood?

What blood did not want to happen has now happened. The blood knew that it was facing Arab blood in the [word indistinct] prepared by the United States. The blood expected a strange face, a foreign name, and feelings of hatred and enmity in the clash. The blood was ready to retaliate against the aggression with all its might but it saw two faces and rifles, one a stranger and the other a brother. Is there anything more difficult than this? Is there anything as painful as this? The blood is on its territory to defend the homeland, honor, holy sites, and an entire nation. Who has brought a [word indistinct] brother in the aggression, under U.S. command, and according to the U.S. plan, and even in the American-Zionist crime?

The lowly of Egypt has not sent the Egyptian soldier [words indistinct] to observe the military operations and

learn; he has sent him as part of the U.S. plan. He has sent him so as to say [words indistinct]. Is not the Iraqi an Egyptian and vice versa? Thus the lowly of Egypt has done it. What has he done with fraternity and ties? What has he done to God who approved this fraternity?

Part of the Egyptian forces have been placed opposite the 14th Division—which is waging the sacred battle against the Americans, their armored vehicles, and their hatred, and is inflicting heavy losses on them and [words indistinct]—this heroic Iraqi, Arab division. Do the Egyptians accept this? Does Egypt accept it? Responsibility falls completely on the lowly. He is also responsible for the defeat [khaybah] because he has chosen and stood with the enemies of the nation and thus deserves defeat, shame, and downfall. O sons of Arabism in beloved Egypt. Let the decision be the one of the 50 million and not the traitor ruler. Historic, pan-Arab, religious, and moral responsibility does not allow silence over a crime at this level. We are concerned about Egypt while we are deeply involved in the defense of Iraq. In our joy and in our victory, we want to see Egypt with clean hands and a clean slate.

Former RCC Member Urges Saddam Overthrow

LD2402171891 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Appeal by Mr. Salah 'Umar al-'Ali, former member of the Regional Command of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party and former member of the Revolution Command Council, RCC; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate: Sons of our honorable Iraqi people, sons of our valiant Army, the thing that we warned against and feared has occurred. The land war began this morning following the failure of all sincere efforts by brothers and friends—the leaders—to convince the criminal tyrant of Iraq, Saddam Husayn, to withdraw from Kuwait and save our homeland, Army, and our beloved people from more catastrophes, defeats, and destruction.

However, the tyrant of Iraq, like all other tyrants before him, totally disregarded the innocent blood, did not think of your national interests, and did not consider the death and destruction that would befall your country and sons. He thinks of himself alone. He is not interested in the suffering you have endured during the past few months of this destructive crisis. He insists on continuing to push your faithful sons into this massacre in defense of his false glory, privileges, and criminal leadership. As you can see, he is unjustifiably and aimlessly pushing our sons into the deadly incinerator. He will inevitably lose this battle, as he lost all of his previous battles. He will flee the battlefield when he becomes certain that the catastrophe has engulfed every street, every house, and every family in Iraq. Honorable sons of Iraq, do you know that Saddam has smuggled his family outside of Iraq and with them he smuggled the remainder of the funds and wealth? He will leave Iraq in ruins and quite empty.

Honorable sons of the Tigris and Euphrates, at this decisive moment of your life and while facing the danger of death at the hands of the foreign forces, you have no option but to put an end to the dictator and his criminal gang in an effort to survive and defend the homeland. Rise to save the homeland from the clutches of dictatorship so that you can devote yourselves to avoiding the dangers of continuing the war and destruction. We are with you in every heartbeat, in all your feelings, and in every move you make. We are with you, O brothers, O our kith and kin, O brave sons of our Armed Forces. History today bears witness to what is going on and demands from you that you make a speedy move to save the homeland from the dilemmas of the dictatorship and war. Prove to your people and nation that you are faithful and honorable sons of this generous country and this honorable nation. Stage a revolution now, before it is too late. We are on your side, we stand by you in whatever you carry out and in every step you take. Hit the headquarters of the tyrant and save the homeland from destruction. Peace and the mercy of God be upon you.

Governor Said Executed Over Demonstrations

LD2202155991 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1500 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] The National Committee for the Salvation of Iraq reports that the tyrant's authorities have executed the governor of al- Simawah, Kazim al-Din Tahir, because he failed to control the demonstration that took place in al-Diwaniyah on 18 February and because the majority of those who participated in the demonstrations escaped to the parks and farms of al-Simawah after killing nine members of the tyrant's intelligence and of the ruling Ba'ath party.

Saddam Said 'Looking For Any Way Out'

LD2202183191 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1500 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Saddam Husayn has fought all his internal and external wars under the cover of general glittering words, which do not explain what he wants. [passage omitted]

Even yesterday he was playing with words and trying to convince the Iraqis that he is committed to the great duel. [passage omitted]

What can we understand from that? Should we not understand that he insists on keeping Kuwait and insists on the ground battle, which he said would be in his favor and that the United States and its allies will drown in a sea of blood? [passage omitted]

After all that Saddam and his partners have said, is there any scope left for reconciliation, or for hope for reasonable fraternal relations between the Iraqi people and the Kuwaiti, Saudi, other inhabitants of the Gulf, Egyptian, and Syrian peoples?

However, all these things were said in Iraq. But the one who was on his way to Moscow had words that were well prepared [words indistinct]. This was relayed and the whole world heard it, but the tyrant's media in Baghdad did not relay it to the Iraqis.

What was relayed in Moscow said: The one who intends to bring the world to its knees and to go through with bloodbaths until the bitter end has been broken, and has admitted defeat, and today he is looking for any way out whatsoever from the corner in which he is locked. The leader of the liberation of Palestine, the Arabs, and the human race, is now running from one capital to another so that his repentance can be accepted and his apology can be accepted and so that he will be allowed to kiss the hands of the Kuwaitis, Saudis, Gulf peoples, Egyptians, Syrians, Turks, Americans, British, French, and the people of never-never land so that they will forgive him for what he did and allow him one thing which is to let him survive, to let him alone survive. As for the Iraqis, and his allies and partners, let them go to hell. All those who died and all these who were destroyed are not worth the nail clippings of the faithful believer and symbol of struggle, Saddam Husayn.

This way he finds himself again in the same humiliating position he put himself with the Iranians, and he will find himself dying in it with his family in Iraq. Is this the ruler who deserves to shoulder the responsibility of a people and a homeland? He is dragging his people and homeland from one hell into another and jumps from one ruin to another just for the sake of fame, authority, and money.

'Key Oppositionist' Interviewed

PM2002113291 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 13-19 Feb 91 p 43

[Dr. Najm 'Abd-al-Karim report on interview with Dr. Tahsin Mu'alla, "a key Iraqi opposition figure;" place, date not given]

[Excerpts][passage omitted] Dr. Mu'alla regards himself as part of the national movement opposed to the regime in Iraq. He believes that many national oppositionists refuse to link themselves with any government, and that most of them live outside the Arab region.

With regard to the Iraqi position, Dr. Mu'alla said: I believe that the Iraqi opposition has been slack. There should have been cooperation toward specific aims such as changing the regime and establishing a temporary coalition government until elections for a constituent assembly are held under democratic conditions, provided that the assembly draws up a permanent constitution. The problem is that Iraq—the country from which the first constitutional legislation, the Hammurabi legislation, emerged—has been without a constitution for over 30 years.

With regard to the terror that hangs over anyone opposed to Saddam's regime, Dr. Mu'alla said: Saddam has executed over 20 people, members of the al-Hakim family, and many others of the family are in prison. If someone receives a visit at home from Iraqi intelligence members and is taken away for five minutes' interrogation, he does not return home. Dr. Mu'alla goes on: Saddam's terror has moved beyond Iraq's borders to Arab and Western states. For example, the late Mahdi al-Hakim was murdered in Sudan, and the culprits departed safely.

But Dr. Mu'alla believes that the exposure of Saddam Husayn's morals and brutal practices has a cost Iraq very dear. He says: The price has been the whole of Iraq. Iraq's young men are dying, and this is distressing. He wonders: Was it not possible for us to avert the catastrophe before it occurred? I believe that Saddam Husayn is responsible for what is happening in the region and in Iraq. He is also responsible for the consequences of the Iraq-Iran war, which claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of young men. [passage omitted]

Asked about whether he believed that Saddam Husayn was in earnest in his call for the liberation of Palestine and about the Israeli-Iraqi contacts, Mu'alla said: I have heard that Nizar Hamdun has many friends in the U.S. Zionist lobby. There are statements by Tariq 'Aziz in that regard. There are also rumors of attempts to hold secret talks with Israel, involving the Foreign Ministry's Taha al-Qaysi and others. President Husni Mubarak has referred to them. He added: Saddam will not incinerate half of Israel. Such a claim cannot be carried out. Iraq has hit Israel with 20 missiles, each costing $1 million. Twenty Israelis have been hurt as a result of those attacks, which means that every Israeli wounded has cost Iraq $1 million. I believe that if the Palestinians link their cause to their support for the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, then have lost that cause.

He believes that Saddam Husayn has more opponents inside Iraq than outside. He said that if the Iraqi president remains in power after the war, rivers of blood will flow in Iraq.

With regard to his view of a solution, Dr. Mu'alla said: I demand Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait. The foreign forces would, as a result, withdraw from the region, then an Arab summit would be held to resolve problems in a fraternal spirit. As for Iraq, it must have a democratic regime that respects human rights. [passage omitted]

*PUK General Secretary Talabani Interviewed

91EN0238A Vienna PROFIL in German 7 Jan 91 pp 33-35

[Interview with Aptriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, General Secretary Talabani, by Michael Siegert; date and

place not given: "Two Million People in Concentration Camps'—first paragraph is PROFIL introduction]

[Text] Jalal Talabani, 57, a lawyer from the Iraqi region of Kurdistan, used to be editor in chief of the newspaper KHABAT (Battle) of the Kurdish-Democratic Party (KDP) in Iraq. In 1961 he converted the Kurdish Peshmerga units from tribal groups into modern mountain guerrilla troops, using the Vietcong as a model. After the defeat of the Kurdish resistance in 1975 he founded the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), whose secretary general he remains to this day.

[Siegert] Mr Talabani, years ago the Kurds were a powerful force in the Near East. Now they are merely victims.

[Talabani] When the Kurdish movement, led by General Bazani, was powerful, Baghdad was unable to attack it beyond its borders—neither in the direction of Iran nor toward Kuwait. The destabilization is Henry Kissinger's fault. In 1975 he arranged for the Treaty of Algiers between the Shah of Iran and Saddam Husayn, with the objective of eliminating the Kurdish national movement. (The Treaty of Algiers awarded to the Shah a border located in the center of the Shatt al Arab. In return he committed himself to cease supporting the Iraqi Kurds. This caused the collapse of Kurdish resistence in Iraq. Ed.) This permitted Iraq to devote its energies to other objectives, such as aggression beyond its borders, starting with the war against Iran in 1980.

[Siegert] What happened to the Kurds in 1988, after the end of the war in the Gulf?

[Talabani] At the end of the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam Husayn sent his troops into Kurdistan and started a genocidal operation using chemical weapons, against Kurdish civilians as well. This resulted in a depopulation of the liberated Kurdish regions, where more than 1 million people had been living. They had to flee into Iran or Turkey, or they moved to the occupied Kurdish territories in Iraq. More than 5,000 Kurdish villages were destroyed by the army down to the foundation walls. About 2 million Kurds are now living in concentration camps on the outskirts of the large cities in Kurdistan.

[Siegert] What are the prospects now for the Kurds in the Iraqi mountains?

[Talabani] Only partisans are left there. Way back in 1976 the border areas saw the start of a 30 km wide, so-called security zone. All Kurds were removed from this border strip, but by now this region extends all the way into the interior of the country, to the banks of the Tigris, 170 km from the border. There had been fertile plains and hundreds of Kurdish villages between the Tigris and Kirkuk, between the Tigris and Harbin—all were destroyed.

[Siegert] How many fighters do you have in the mountains?

[Talabani] Thousands of them. But should the necessity arise, we could mobilize tens of thousands. The goal of our fight is to force Saddam Husayn to retreat from our areas. We do not wish to occupy Baghdad, but only to get the Iraqi regime to acknowledge our rights. For this purpose all we need are small, well-organized units which can surface anyplace, are highly mobile, can make surprise attacks, and then hide.

[Siegert] Will there be uprisings in Iraq in which the Kurds will participate?

[Talabani] There is a new atmosphere in the cities where Kurds live. The people hope that Saddam Husayn will be overthrown. The members of the reigning Baath party and the military leaders fear that the Kuwait conflict will lead to the collapse of the regime. This war is different from that with Iran from 1980 to 1988. Many soldiers desert from the army and go into hiding.

[Siegert] Are you in contact with other Iraqi opposition groups?

[Talabani] Yes. All 17 opposition groups signed a joint declaration in the Syrian capital, Damascus. Iraq is to become a democracy, and there must be an end to ethnic oppression. These groups are composed of Kurds, Arab Sunnis and Shi'ites, left wingers and right wingers. All have illegal organizations inside the country, some of them even inside the army.

[Siegert] What does the declaration say about the future fate of the Kurds?

[Talabani] Our agreement contains a passage on that subject: an end to national oppression, no Arabization of the Kurdish region and the return of the Kurds into their home villages, as well as compliance with the agreement concluded 30 years ago between the Iraqi Government and the Kurds. It contains a guarantee of an autonomous Kurdistan within Iraq and Kurdish participation in governmental legislation in Baghdad. All 17 opposition groups agreed to this.

[Siegert] What if there is only a coup within the regime?

[Talabani] Things cannot get worse than they are now. If Saddam Husayn were to be toppled, the regime would collapse too. Even if a military dissident group were to take over, the Baath party would disappear, which would eliminate the political control it exercises over the country. Such a new system would be weak, because it would be based solely on the military. It would have to search for compromise with the United States, with Kuwait, and with all neighbors. Thus it would be forced to negotiate with the Kurds also.

[Siegert] The Turks hope that in case of war the Americans would give them a free hand in northern Iraq, in return for their support in the fight against Saddam Husayn. How would you feel about a Kurdish state in northern Iraq under Turkish control?

[Talabani] We are in favor of a democratic government in Iraq and of self-determination for the Kurdish people within Iraq, for a truly autonomous Kurdistan. If in the course of an armed conflict Turkey were to penetrate into northern Iraq, it would probably annex that region and would not permit an autonomous Kurdish state, not even a puppet regime. Even a Kurdish puppet state would motivate the Kurds in Turkey, who number about 15 million, in Iran, and other parts of the Near East, to revolt. I do not believe that in the end this will come about because such a shift of borders would trigger an all-Arab resistance. The USSR and Iran would be against it too.

[Siegert] Some Kurds in Turkey have expressed the fear that in case of war the Turks might massacre them, as they did the Armenians in 1915.

[Talabani] If the Americans start a war today, they cannot permit a massacre to take place which will be witnessed worldwide, with TV cameras everywhere. In 1915 there was no television. If the Turks were to invade Iraq, they would not massacre the Kurds, but rather try to gain their goodwill to get them to come to Turkey. We would not lose anything that way.

[Siegert] Are you in favor of a new war in the Gulf, or do you fear it?

[Talabani] I am sure this war will come about, because Saddam Husayn will not withdraw from Kuwait. We Kurds have nothing to lose, and we have no fears. Of course we are not in favor of war. We would much prefer a peaceful, political solution. We would like to see the Iraqi people replace the dictatorship with a democratic government which would withdraw from Kuwait.

[Box, p 33]

"The Terrorists Call Themselves Kurds"

An Austrian Student [Herbert Klar] joins the Kurdish guerrillas in the East Anatolian Mountains in August 1990.

The "Peshmerga" troop ("They who look death in the eye") moves in almost total silence across mountain passes at an altitude of 2,500 meters, down across the valleys and once again up into the high mountains. Carefully it avoids the Turkish Army posts which lurk within a few kilometers of each other in the valleys and send patrols all over the area. The guerrilla unit, numbering about 100 people, among them 20 women and a few youths, is just returning from skirmishes in the Pervari area. It is completely dark; nevertheless they move quickly, almost in double time. Shepherds and villagers accompany them to their hiding place.

The Peshmerga bases in the mountains are caves or branch-covered shelters for 200 to 300 people. There is no fixed equipment—everything necessary to live and fight is always carried along. The peasants feed the Peshmerga troops during the night.

As a rule what happens is this: about 100 enter a village; there is a meeting and a briefing on objectives. Some villagers always join the fighters when they depart. Constantly there are battles for military support bases; even helicopters are shot down with antitank grenade launchers.

Apart from the Army, "village defenders," paid and armed by the Turkish government, perform guard and security functions. However, it frequently happens that not only the Kurdish villagers, but also the village defenders cooperate with the ARGK (Kurdistan People's Liberation Army, an organization subordinate to the Kurdistan Workers' Party/PKK).

The guerrilla fighters live in hideaways, camouflaged with tree branches, which serve as sleeping quarters and communication centers. This is where the young people are indoctrinated in party philosophy and the art of war by fighters trained in Lebanon.

A village on the Turkish-Iraqi border. The inhabitants of this oasis, situated in a narrow, V-shaped valley, are self-sufficient; they raise cattle and do their planting on irrigated, terraced fields. In the old days the village could be reached only on footpaths; last May it got a road. Shortly thereafter a military post and helicopter landing pad were built.

The commander, who has requisitioned the school building for his needs, justifies the installation of this facility: "It is designed for military training purposes and to protect the villagers from terrorists coming from Iraq. The terrorists call themselves Kurds and are trying to force the local Turkish population to support separatist activities." Even though a large number of the villagers speak only Kurdish, the officer denies the existence of the Kurds. For him, they are nothing but "primitive, uncivilized peasants."

Forty village defenders are kept from their farming activity by their anti-guerrilla service. Their high salaries make them forget their traditional lifestyle, and their constant contact with the Turkish military leads to assimilation.

One of the village defenders, Mustafer K., takes me to his house under cover of darkness. He shows me pictures of Abdullah Oezcalan, the secretary general of the PKK, who is referred to as "apo" ("uncle"). Mustafer swears: "In our hearts we hate the soldiers. We take the government's money and use it to support our friends in the mountains. Not everybody thinks that way; many are afraid of forcible relocation, rape of their wives, death. But our numbers are growing."

Shamir Reacts to Gulf Crisis Developments

Does Not Think State To Intervene

TA2402162891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] I do not think Israel will partake in the ground offensive of the allied armies, the prime minister said at the end of a memorial service for Levi Eshkol, Israel's third prime minister, today. Our correspondent Udi Segal reports.

[Begin recording] [Segal] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir does not believe that Israel will intervene at any stage in the allied forces' ground offensive against Kuwait and Iraq. He said he does not think Israel will take part in the current offensive.

Shamir lauded the coalition countries that are currently facing the critical stage of the war, wishing their armies success against the Baghdad tyrant.

[Shamir] We naturally bless the U.S. leadership and army, as well as all allied forces, at this critical stage of the war against Iraqi tyranny, and extend to them wishes for full success in the execution of their mission. [end recording]

Says Interests of Peace Identical

TA2402203791 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Halperin; in Shamir's office on 24 February—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Halperin] Is an Israeli operation against the area in Iraq that is threatening Israel still possible?

[Shamir] I hope there will be no need for it. After all, we and the U.S.-led coalition fully share an interest in terminating the Scud missile threat that is casting a pall on our lives.

[Halperin] Does this mean that the Americans will be stepping up their raids on the H2 and H3 area?

[Shamir] In any event, they will not stop raiding that area in order to curtail Iraq's capability to attack us.

[Halperin] Has the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] been placed on a special state of alert since the beginning of the land campaign in Kuwait?

[Shamir] The IDF is always ready for every eventuality. [passage omitted]

[Halperin] Is there any fear, sir, that even if Kuwait is liberated, Saddam Husayn might remain in power with his Army not fully disintegrated?

[Shamir] Everything is possible, but we hope that the logic of recent events and the process of sobering up that has taken place so far will not let the war end before Saddam Husayn's tyrannical regime and all its threats have been terminated. We know this to be the position of the U.S. President and his close aides. Indeed, we hope that this time, too, it will be proven that the interests of Israel and those of the United States, the free world, and peace are absolutely identical.

Says IDF Ready If Conditions Change

TA2202122491 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir says it will be very dangerous for Israel if Saddam Husayn remains in power with a substantial part of his army intact. The prime minister was speaking to a delegation from Israel Bonds in Jerusalem this morning. Mark Weiss reports:

[Begin recording] [Weiss] It has been difficult for Israel not to respond to Iraqi attacks, the prime minister said, and the change in the Gulf may alter things.

[Shamir] If the conditions change, we will change our behavior; our Army is ready.

[Weiss] The prime minister said everybody knows the real aim of who he termed this crazy man, Saddam Husayn, is to destroy Israel. Jerusalem fully supports the policy and leadership of President Bush. The prime minister said the whole world is facing a dilemma, and Israel would also like to see the end of the war. However, he made it clear that the current peace proposals do not go far enough for Israel.

[Shamir] We can say now that it would be very bad and dangerous for us if Saddam Husayn remained in power in Iraq with a substantial part of his huge army still intact. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1115 GMT on 22 February carries a related report by Mira Amsalem, who quotes the prime minister as having said that "the Americans will be the ones to decide on the end of the war, and their decision will have a bearing on Israel. We do not give advice to the United States because we are not involved in the war, but we are apprehensive."

[Amsalem adds that Shamir went on to say that if the war ends and Saddam remains in power with a substantial part of his Army intact, "Israel will still be exposed to the same dangers. We may experience a brief period of peace, but the tragedy will strike again at some later point. That is why we would like to see a final solution to this danger and threat."

[In a recorded passage in English, Shamir says: "I think that until now the President's leadership has been excellent. His decisions have been brilliant. I think it was a great achievement—a personal achievement of the President and a political achievement of the United States—to organize this great coalition."

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1110 GMT on 22 February notes that the prime minister concluded his speech by saying that "Israel's defense is now limited to restraint. Under the present circumstances there is no other way, but the situation may yet change."]

Government Reacts to U.S. Ultimatum to Iraq

Expresses 'Satisfaction'

TA2202163891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1630 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] Israel expresses satisfaction with the U.S. steadfastness. This is Jerusalem's official reaction to the new U.S. ultimatum to Iraq. Nevertheless, Israel is not too pleased with the possibility that an Iraqi compliance with the ultimatum might leave the Iraqis with military capability.

Indiates 'Careful Optimism'

TA2202172991 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] This evening Jerusalem expressed appreciation for the determined stand shown by U.S. President Bush in his statement. Bush's statement does not allow Saddam to play any more games—he must answer with a simple yes or no, the political sources said. The sources doubted whether Saddam would accept the ultimatum; however, if he were to accept it, this would constitute an unconditional withdrawal. Jerusalem believes that if Saddam accepts the U.S. ultimatum this will constitute virtual capitulation.

What effect should the U.S. declaration have on Israel? If Saddam accepts Bush's terms, something the sources consider almost impossible, then the Iraqi leader comes out without any achievements, and a beaten Saddam is a cause for satisfaction for Israel. If Saddam rejects the ultimatum, then a ground offensive will begin what is expected to eliminate the Iraqi threat to Israel. Careful optimism would be the right term for Jerusalem's reaction to the U.S. announcement.

Defense Minister Arens Comments

TA2202195591 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1838 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Interview in the studio with Defense Minister Moshe Arens and U.S. correspondent Ya'ir Stern in Washington by anchorman Eli'ezer Ya'ari and army affairs correspondent Moshe Shlonsky—live]

[Text] [Shlonsky] Good evening to Defense Minister Moshe Arens.

[Arens] Good evening and a peaceful Sabbath.

[Shlonsky] Are the conditions [ultimatum to Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait] stipulated by President George Bush and his spokesman Marlin Fitzwater acceptable to you?

[Arens] We are not the ones who have to accept these conditions, but President Bush is clearly continuing to demonstrate leadership, determination, and he is leading the coalition facing Saddam Husayn in the best possible way.

[Shlonsky] Do you accept the version expressed by military sources that the authorities are not preventing public hysteria and if so, what will happen in the event of a ground offensive? Will people then enter shelters, stop working, close down schools? Why do you not inform the public of the real scope of danger it is facing, if there is any danger at all? Should they get into shelters or should they carry on with their normal lives even if a ground offensive begins?

[Arens] There is no need to change any of the steps we have been taking for months, especially during the last few weeks. We have taken steps, and this has been a burden to us as a society and regarding the economy, but these were precautionary steps that I consider essential. Nothing needs to be done beyond that.

[Ya'ari] With your permission, Moshe Shlonsky and Mr. Defense Minister, we have Ya'ir Stern on our satellite line. I would like him to give us an additional update on what is happening in Washington. Ya'ir, are you with us?

[Stern] I am with you all the time, Eli'ezer.

[Ya'ari] Hello, Ya'ir. What were the reactions immediately following President Bush's speech, and could you, as the defense minister is with us in the studio now, tell us where Israel fits in the picture?

[Stern] Well, the initial reactions were sighs of relief by the public here, and the politicians also expressed their feeling that Bush had taken the reins in hand and shown who was running this crisis. He is receiving a great deal of support for the brave step he took today.

[Ya'ari] And where is Israel in this picture? There is a kind of feeling, especially after Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari's remarks tonight, that there was some sort of compromise here. The Iraqi Army actually got a free ticket out of Kuwait.

[Stern] No, I do not think that Israel was sold short in this respect. First of all, the United States has to look out for the interests of all the coalition members; however, you may have noticed that in the conditions specified by Fitzwater there was also a clause stipulating that if Saddam Husayn was serious about his intentions he must immediately stop firing missiles at other countries, or in other words Saudi Arabia and Israel. Therefore, the immediate Israeli interest has been taken into account here. Besides, I can tell you that there have been many statements by Israeli spokesmen on the U.S. media, the Israeli position has been broadcast by all the networks,

and there is the sense of relief in Jerusalem following President Bush's speech this morning.

[Ya'ari] Thank you, Ya'ir Stern. I would now like to ask you a question, Mr. Defense Minister: Would an Iraqi acceptance of the U.S. ultimatum mean that the war is over as far as we are concerned?

[Arens] I do not think that we should expect more than what was demanded by the U.S. President. The United States is acting on the basis of the Security Council resolution and therefore has demanded that Iraq obey this resolution. I do not think that we could expect more. If the Iraqis fail to obey this decision and follow the clear and catagorical demands issued by President Bush, we can assume that the fighting will continue and the destruction of the Iraqi military potential will continue.

[Shlonsky] Mr. Arens, with your permission let us return to the previous issue. You stated before that if a ground offensive begins there will be no change in behavior. Schools will be open, people will go to work. Do you foresee the possibility of a chemical attack or any danger that could lead to changes in the Israeli lifestyle?

[Arens] I did not say that. You are well aware, Moshe, that we are specially prepared and equipped for the threat of a chemical attack. I do not know if the probability of that is high; we may be simply laughing at ourselves in several weeks if this does not transpire, but we must be prepared and indeed we are. As I noted before, however, there is no need to take any measures beyond those steps, and there are quite a few of them, that we have already adopted.

[Shlonsky] Would you expect the United States to demand that Iraq leave all its armored forces in Kuwait, even though the armor and artillery of the Iraqi Army has already been damaged? Would you want this to constitute one of the conditions?

[Arens] I do not think that it would be wise on our behalf to give the Americans advice or tell them what we think they should do. President Bush is running things very well and I do not think he needs any advice from the sidelines at this stage.

[Shlonsky] How about the fact that as of today Israel has not taken any action, at a time when we may be nearing the end of the war? Has this caused any harm to Israel's deterrent capability in the eyes of the Arab countries or in the eyes of the United States, or has Israel perhaps been greatly weakened as a result of its non-intervention just prior to the anticipated political moves?

[Arens] I do not think that our deterrent capability has been detrimentally affected in the final analysis. Our deterrent capability is primarily linked to our military prowess which is formidable, a fact which I think is well known.

[Shlonsky] What about political pressures after the war?

[Arens] Political pressures are environmental conditions which we have been living with for the past 42 years. I imagine that these will also come, but we have already learned to withstand political pressures in all those instances when the pressures contravened our interests.

[Shlonsky] Mr. Arens, thank you very much.

Arens on Ground Battle, Efforts in Western Iraq

TA2402054091 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0507 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Dan Shilon—live]

[Text] [Shilon] Defense Minister Moshe Arens, good morning.

[Arens] Good morning.

[Shilon] What do you know, sir, about the ground battle which began last night?

[Arens] I am afraid I cannot say anything beyond what you have already heard in the various reports, including CNN's, and I am sure you have heard the President's words: The battle has begun.

[Shilon] Have you been updated by the Pentagon?

[Arens] Yes, we receive updates.

[Shilon] Are we calm?

[Arens] Are we calm? I think there is cause to be calm, as well as satisfied.

[Shilon] And to carry on our normal life in this situation, when we are hearing reports, such as that in THE LOS ANGELES TIMES, about the possibility of the use of chemical weapons against the allied forces, perhaps even against Israel?

[Arens] Well, we have lived with what we term emergency routine for some time now. We have taken all the necessary precautionary measures, and we are prepared for any eventuality, including a chemical attack. What we need to do is simply follow all the instructions and hope it will not happen.

[Shilon] Mr. Minister, people who have just woken up and heard reports about the ground battle are, as a matter of course, interested in the threat to Israel from western Iraq, from H2 and H3. We have not heard anything about the allies entering that sector. What does this mean to you, as defense minister?

[Arens] They did not enter that sector, but the allied air forces are beginning to take care of the area.

[Shilon] Does that mean that we are not liable to be exposed to missiles today?

[Arens] It means nothing of the kind, because U.S. aircraft have been taking care of this area for several

weeks now, and although they have reduced the Iraqi capability of launching missiles against us, they have not eliminated the threat altogether, as we saw yesterday.

[Shilon] Is there a possibility that Israel will be incorporated in the present ground combat in one way or another?

[Arens] Well, you will understand if I prefer not to address this question at the present stage.

[Shilon] Mr. Defense Minister, I thank you very much. With your permission, we will return to you whenever you feel you have additional information for the public. Good morning to you.

[Arens] Good morning.

Soviet Role in Gulf Situation Discussed

Could Allow Iraqi Threat Renewal

TA2202214891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 2130 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] The new Soviet plan contains no reference to a future Iraqi threat against Israel, political sources in Jerusalem this evening told our political correspondent Natan Gutman. The Soviet proposal calls for a halt to the sanctions on Iraq immediately after its withdrawal from Kuwait, and Israel fears that this could allow Iraq to rebuild its military power and renew its threat against Israel.

Official Jerusalem has so far refrained from commenting on the numerous diplomatic options.

Netanyahu on Soviet Involvement

TA2202120091 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by David Essing on 22 February; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Netanyahu] We are studying the Soviet proposal and Saddam's response, so we will have a detailed formal response later, but it is clear this is a conditional withdrawal, and it seems to me to run against the whole principle of the allied campaign.

[Essing] How is it conditional?

[Netanyahu] Well, it says, for example, that the sanctions against Iraq will be lifted at a certain point during the withdrawal. It says that there will be a cease-fire in advance of the withdrawal, and so on. It slaps on various conditions which make this not an unconditional withdrawal, which people have been talking about.

[Essing] How serious would it be for Israel if Saddam Husayn were allowed to get out of what he has gotten into in Kuwait with his remaining military power still intact?

[Netanyahu] It would be serious not only for Israel; it would be serious for the entire region, indeed for the entire world, if he is free to pursue his military plans, his unconventional weapons programs. He still has his ballistic missiles—many of them—and his chemical weapons. It could very well result in a future Kuwait, because the invasion of Kuwait was merely a symptom of the larger disease, and the disease is the unbridled aggression of a savage regime, and if it was left with its military machinery intact, then we could expect other such acts of aggression.

So from our point of view there need be two outcomes: One outcome is the unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait, but the second is the dismantling of Iraq's capacity to threaten others in the region in the future. If both of these can be achieved through diplomatic pressure that is born from military pressure, that's fine with us. We are not insisting unnecessarily on a war to achieve them, but we are saying that these two outcomes are absolutely necessary if we are to have peace in this region.

[Essing] One final question: the Soviet involvement. Are we seeing again the old Soviet gambit of saving the Arabs by coming in at the last minute? And does this mean reverting to the old Cold War situation of a rivalry between the USSR and the United States in the Middle East?

[Netanyahu] Well, I hope not. I hope that what we are going to see is the new USSR and not the old USSR that automatically lines up with the most predatory and most radical Arab regimes, arms them, and gives them the benefit of diplomatic cover. I hope that the USSR will realize that the hopes that the world has pinned on them of a great departure and a movement into a new age, that those hopes are met and that so many people in the world will not be disappointed. Iraq, the crisis with Kuwait, and the Soviets' behavior towards these issues is a good barometer for the future.

Netanyahu Interviewed on Goals of Gulf War

TA2202152891 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1400 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Studio interview with Binyamin Netanyahu, deputy foreign minister, by Dan Margalit in the "Supplement of Supplements" program—live]

[Text] [Margalit] Good evening Deputy Foreign Minister Netanyahu.

[Netanyahu] Good evening.

[Margalit] You know, in journalism school you are taught never to ask questions that are too open or general. Nevertheless, I am about to break that rule and ask you whether what is happening in Moscow now with all its attendant clauses, with the UN, with the United States, with the moderate Arab states—is it good for the Jews or bad for the Jews?

[Netanyahu] It depends on how it ends. We all have an idea of what is good for us. However, I would suggest we first let the Americans react. They have still not officially responded, and they are certainly aware of the problems involved in this whole maneuver and of what they would like to achieve.

[Margalit] What do we expect from the United States?

[Netanyahu] I think there are two problems here. One problem is one issue that we definitely support and that is Iraq's unilateral, rapid, and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. That is what the coalition led by the United States is actually demanding from Iraq. That much is clear. Beyond this, I think that there is a basic problem. Missiles landed in Tel Aviv and in areas inside Israel in what one could say was just several hours ago. This underscores the threat posed here, not just to Israel but to the entire Middle East, as long as that tyranny and its arsenal of weapons still exists. Therefore, the problem that must be resolved in parallel or in addition to the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait is the disarmament of Saddam Husayn and Iraq. Disarmament of the weapons that can threaten the entire region. This is the solution that must be achieved.

[Margalit] But these are two different things. There could be a process of disarming Iraq if the Iraqi soldiers withdraw from Kuwait but leave their weapons behind in the sand, while the second thing is ending Saddam Husayn's regime. Do we expect the United States to define, formulate, or perhaps change the goals of the war and state that the termination of Saddam Husayn's regime is a condition to end the fighting?

[Netanyahu] We do not define the goal as the termination of a regime but rather as the removal of a threat, the elimination of a threat. And this threat exists; it is real. What we would like to see is, as I said, the disarming of Iraq of its intimidating weaponry. This can be achieved in different ways. I think that today the United States has tremendous power. In effect, all that we are seeing, including the present move—because after all what does it stem from—results from the military threat, from the threat of a massive ground offensive, the consequences of which are perfectly clear to Saddam Husayn. Therefore, the United States is in a very comfortable position to dictate conditions, and not just short-term conditions but also long-standing conditions. I do not think that the Soviet Union, in its present condition, can actually exert any significant counter pressure, and it may also be interested in supporting such a goal. The liquidation of the Iraqi threat is a world interest, in my opinion.

[Margalit] But can the United States achieve its goals, for example forcefully effecting the disarmament of the Iraqi war machine, without deviating from the mandate it got from the United Nations within the lines of which it is operating?

[Netanyahu] The United States has decided to act as it desires. Right now I am not addressing the issue of the UN mandate; the United States can decide that issue for itself. It is clear, however, that the culmination of this conflict will pose two problems. Let us imagine that Iraq withdraws from Kuwait, the first problem will be the fact that Kuwait is merely a symptom of a much larger disease, of a spreading cancer which by chance reached this sick member which is Kuwait. Okay, we amputate the limb, but the root of the cancer is in that armed tyranny, which, by the way, is a tyranny whose main armaments—its ballistic missiles, its chemical weapons, and perhaps even a nuclear weapons program—remain in its possession. Consequently, that is what must be neutralized and taken apart. I must tell you that even that, in my estimate, only constitutes an interim solution, because a sovereign state cannot for an extended period be prevented from arming itself, as we saw in the case of Germany between world wars. Therefore, the long-term solution, and I hope it will be instituted following the Gulf war, is to bring about what also happened in Germany—democratization. Because, in the long run, that is the best guarantee. However, as long as that does not take place, what is called for is the disarmament of all this threatening weaponry as well as the arming of all the victims of these weapons—and first and foremost Israel.

[Margalit] Does this Israeli demand, as expressed publicly both in your statements and in statements made by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, not hamper American efforts to secure the support of the coalition and of the moderate Arab states in its campaign against Saddam Husayn?

[Netanyahu] I will not tell you what we hear from the Arab states and what demands they have come up with.

[Margalit] What for example?

[Netanyahu] Very extreme demands. They clearly realize that this is not just a threat to us. They well understand that this regime can, and actually does threaten them. I do not fear....

[Margalit, interrupting] I will not ask you what you know, I will only ask you for your estimate. Do you estimate that the moderate Arab countries, let us say part of the three, at least Saudi Arabia and Egypt have been exhorting the United States to not let go?

[Netanyahu] I will not get into estimates or reports. I can only tell you that the statements we come out with are based on the profound recognition that this is necessary for our security but also to facilitate a more comprehensive peace in our region. If Saddam Husayn remains with his war machine intact, in its current state, with the potential to threaten the region, there will be no progress toward peace, there will be no such progress.

[Margalit] Deputy Foreign Minister Netanyahu, thank you.

Shomron Discusses Iraqi Strength, IDF Plans

TA2202180291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1642 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Interview with Lieutenant General Dan Shomron, chief of the General Staff, by army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe; on 22 February, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Menashe] Chief of Staff Shomron, if Saddam Husayn withdraws he will still have a fighting ability and will be left with military power, is that so?

[Shomron] There is no doubt that the USSR has given Saddam Husayn a ladder to climb down from the tree and get away by the skin of his teeth, the many mistakes he has committed so far notwithstanding. This, however, is also a lever for the Soviet Union and a means to reenter the Middle East and constitute a dominant factor in the new overall Middle East order, particularly, so it seems, in the Gulf. I therefore find it difficult to see how the United States can accept this change, having exerted so much effort and suffered casualties. I can hardly see the United States accepting this change.

[Menashe] What about Saddam Husayn's military strength?

[Shomron] This is related to the possibility that the United States and the coalition countries will not attain their goals, which is to say the destruction of the Iraqi war machine together with the threat it poses to the Middle East and the entire world. If Saddam emerges unscathed now, I believe this goal will have been only very partially achieved.

[Menashe] Meaning that if Saddam Husayn remains in power this will spell another war?

[Shomron] It will mean a constant threat in the Middle East, and definitely the possibility of another war.

[Menashe] If the United States rejects the withdrawal offer and a ground offensive begins, according to the assessments we have heard Saddam Husayn may grow more radical and launch missiles outfitted with chemical warheads at Israel as well?

[Shomron] It was our assessment even before the outbreak of the war that when it breaks out, Saddam Husayn might well launch missiles at Israel. We said then that when he is distressed and pushed to the wall, that would be the stage when he might deploy chemical weapons as the last resort to extort a heavy price and perhaps even halt the war at a stage in which he will not have been completely defeated.

[Menashe] How well is the home front prepared for a chemical attack, should one occur?

[Shomron] I think our home front is better prepared than most—perhaps all—of the countries of the world. Everyone has individual protective kits, the public has been drilled on what to do during a chemical attack emergency, and for the moment we regard every launch as one that could involve a chemical warhead. We also know that there are additional possibilities, such as aircraft [mounted with chemical weapons]. We have replies for that as well, but I would say that the Israeli home front is well prepared.

Let me take this opportunity to remind the Israeli public not to grow apathetic. The possibility of a chemical attack still exists, although to date all the missiles that have been fired carried conventional warheads.

[Menashe] The argument over the policy of restraint has resurfaced in the past few days. Does that policy erode Israel's deterrence?

[Shomron] Let me first of all say something about deterrence: Deterrence is essentially a subjective term. It cannot be quantified. A leader's decision comes after he has weighed the goals he wants to attain against the price he might have to pay. He then decides whether he is prepared to pay that price. Saddam Husayn is ready to pay any price, which is why as far as he is concerned deterrence does not exist, not even where the United States is involved. But all the Arab leaders know very well how strong the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is and are aware of its operational capability. I, therefore, believe that in essence deterrence has not been detrimentally affected. I think that many of these leaders greatly admire the home front's ability to withstand; that, too, constitutes an element in future deterrence. Thus, our deterrent capability remains unharmed, and others know that as well.

[Menashe] At what stage will Israel resort to the military option vis-a-vis Iraq, if at all?

[Shomron] Clearly if the missiles continue to fall on Israel, even if this happens at the end of the war, we will undoubtedly take action. The IDF has clear, well-defined plans which, to the best of my understanding, are good. Should the need arise, when the Government of Israel so decides, we will operate against this threat. This is our job.

[Menashe] Does the General Staff support the policy of restraint?

[Shomron] The General Staff is aware of the overall—which is to say both short-term and long-term—Israeli considerations. It submits its recommendations to the cabinet, or more specifically the Ministerial Committee on Security Affairs. Yet its position is unimportant; what is important is the government's decision.

[Menashe] But that depends on the General Staff and the chief of staff's positions.

[Shomron] I definitely accept, understand, and justify the cabinet's moves.

[Menashe] In the course of the past month, different—sometimes conflicting—reports have been filed on the number of launchers Saddam Husayn has. Is it clear today how many are left?

[Shomron] I think I would not trust anyone who cites a figure today, because some of the reports on the destruction of the launchers are pilots' reports. I am not sure how carefully they have been checked. I would, therefore, say simply: There are still launchers, certainly mobile ones and perhaps fewer stationary ones. There are also missiles. That combination tells us that the ability to fire missiles at us—Israel, as well as Saudi Arabia—still exists.

[Menashe] So this could happen again tonight?

[Shomron] Indeed, although I certainly hope not.

[Menashe] Has the Patriots' interception capability improved, or is the only solution the Arrow antimissile missile?

[Shomron] Even when we complete all the modifications we currently think are possible, the Patriot missile will still be far from being the Arrow; it will still be an excellent antiaircraft missile, though as far as its ability to intercept surface-to-surface missiles it will remain handicapped by considerable limitations. At the same time, we are definitely making improvements. We learn from our experience, short though it is, as ours—here and in Saudi Arabia—may be the only experience anyone in the world has had with it in intercepting Scud missiles. We are progressing, and I think that the Patriot will shortly be a better missile than it has been to date.

[Menashe] Was the last missile intercepted?

[Shomron] There is no question that the Patriot hit it. As for the degree of damage caused to the Scud, we are examining this. We have the pieces and we know a lot.

[Menashe] Last week, the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee discussed intelligence. To what extent were you aware of the extent of Saddam Husayn's power?

[Shomron] I must clearly say that we were aware of it. I think Israeli Intelligence's data was sufficient to offer the basis for all the necessary decisions. We encountered no surprises. Of course, as to pinpointing someone or mentioning a certain piece of military equipment under development and where exactly it was located at a specific moment—that was hard to tell. Still, as far as intelligence is concerned, we had all the information to make the right decisions.

[Menashe] Some people are already demanding a commission of inquiry.

[Shomron] As a rule, I think that as far as these demands for commissions of inquiry are concerned, perhaps it would be advisable once to query all those who disseminated misinformation, thereby baffling and alarming the Israeli public. Perhaps they should at some point be investigated in commissions.

[Menashe] Those who claim that intelligence has failed base themselves, among other things, on the fact that you were unaware of the invasion of Kuwait.

[Shomron] We were aware of the concentration of forces, we knew that that possibility was very imminent. In actual fact, we knew about the invasion a few hours after it began.

[Menashe] According to reports, the IDF and the Intelligence Branch demanded larger budgets to improve the early-warning capability, but you had other priorities or else your demands were not answered.

[Shomron] We do not usually manage to meet the demands of all the elements, all of whom raise their legitimate demands. That is because we are restricted by budgetary limitations, and they are justified. That is why the army operates with limited resources. We understand this, we adapt. The Intelligence Branch receives the necessary resources. I definitely believe that if our budget was larger, that branch would receive additional funds.

[Menashe] Including spy satellites?

[Shomron] Both a satellite as well as additional means which we could obtain quickly but which, due solely to the budget crunch, we have been unable to procure.

[Menashe] Can we say clearly today that the Iraqis have chemical warheads?

[Shomron] It is hard to tell, and let me explain why: We have known for some time now that Iraq was developing chemical warheads for its different Scud missiles. It is undergoing an accelerated process. Furthermore, it is also experimenting. It is very hard to tell precisely at what development stage they are now. Hence the constant doubts as to whether or not these warheads are operational. They can, no doubt, manufacture primitive warheads and have already experimented with them. Whether they have stockpiled operational chemical warheads, that is hard for us to tell. Still, our operational assumption is that they can fire them, even if they are primitive, and even if they wreak lighter damage than a regular warhead carrying the load it is capable of. They are still capable of causing real damage.

[Menashe] Could intelligence not have known about these means ahead of time?

[Shomron] Look, in this area our intelligence does not work alone but in coordination with large and highly funded intelligence bodies. They trade information. What we know is what all the countries—apart from Iraq, naturally—that deal in searching and locating what there is, know. Thus, that intelligence is the combination of a comprehensive intelligence effort. We do not have

an unambiguous answer. We know a lot, but we do not know what development level he has achieved precisely now.

[Menashe] Mr. Chief of Staff, today is the 35th day of the war in the Gulf. What is your prediction about the next stages of the war, or when do you think the fighting will end?

[Shomron] First of all, the United States and the coalition countries have so far managed very well to harm the infrastructure and the main forces, ultimately leading Saddam Husayn to feel that he will be totally defeated in war. However, war is ultimately largely held on the psychological level. An army collapses when it thinks and feels it can no longer fight. This usually does not happen on the basis of bombardments only. The land operation is important to crush Iraq's ground forces. Thus, we are at the stage that precedes the ground offensive. I very much hope that the Soviet initiative will not interfere with this stage, which is very important for the attainment of the coalition's goals, and by implication also for our interests.

[Menashe] So you can still not see the collapse of the Iraqi Army?

[Shomron] Several units have definitely broken down; I also believe that some commanders have buckled under. Yet in order to see the military framework collapse, it will be necessary to have ground battles as well. I sincerely hope the coalition will succeed in achieving all its objectives, so that we will be able to see the Iraqi threat eliminated for the good of the Middle East and the world as a whole.

[Menashe] Thank you very much.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 22 February reports on the above interview, adding that "regarding the situation in Jordan, the chief of staff said that the local regime is losing its grip on its policy [as heard]. The Muslim Brotherhood in that country is becoming more extremely anti-Israel and anti-America, and this threatens King Husayn's reign. At this stage, the Jordanian Army is still involved in defensive deployment and is making efforts to prevent infiltrations into Israel."]

Ben-Aharon Foresees 'Far-Reaching Changes' in Gulf

TA2502070491 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0610 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with Yosi Ben-Aharon, Prime Minister's Office director general, by Dan Shilon—live]

[Excerpt] [Shilon] Yosi Ben-Aharon, the Prime Minister's Office director general, is on the line. Good morning to you.

[Ben-Aharon] A very good morning.

[Shilon] What does the Prime Minister's Office know about the Gulf battle this morning?

[Ben-Aharon] Nothing beyond the media reports, because as you know, the allies, mainly the Americans, have imposed a blackout on the news from the combat arena. Therefore, we know no more than you do. We are following the events and, in addition, our defense establishment maintains direct contact with the Pentagon. Perhaps the defense establishment has more information, but I know that they, too, do not have a clear picture of the situation, because the Americans want to ensure a battle fog until their goals are achieved.

[Shilon] Are the Americans withholding information on the subject of western Iraq, which is of particular interest to us?

[Ben-Aharon] No, I think they draw the line there. There is much more openness and exchange of information on the subject of western Iraq and the missile attacks on us.

[Shilon] What does it mean in the context of last night's missile attacks on Israel?

[Ben-Aharon] It means that, when such an attack takes place, the American satellites provide us with an early warning, which allows us to activate the sirens, alert the public, and send them to their sealed rooms and gas masks. As for the Americans, the information allows them to locate the launch sites and to take action against the launchers.

[Shilon] What you have described is part of a routine that was introduced at the beginning of this war. In view of the fact that missiles continue falling here, despite the onset of the ground attack over 24 hours ago, we would like to know whether the Israeli Government has been receiving satisfactory answers from the Americans regarding the extent of danger to Israel and the measures taken toward eliminating it.

[Ben-Aharon] The great ground battle has begun, and everyone is waiting for its results. It will doubtlessly affect the entire combat arena and Iraq's military capability, and it will naturally affect the Iraqi regime's motivation to use weapons, including Scud missiles, against both Israel and Saudi Arabia. I believe it is a matter of time. If the developments continue to be as fast as they have been so far, we will witness far-reaching changes.

[Shilon] Does the Israeli establishment share the assessment prevailing in Washington this morning that the war will be over by the end of this week, more or less?

[Ben-Aharon] I am not sure it is a genuine assessment reflecting the views of the Pentagon's top echelons. I think we ought to wait a while longer to be positive that the key operation of outflanking Kuwait succeeds in trapping the Iraqi Army's crack units, such as the Republican Guards and the major part of the armored forces, which will break Iraqi Army's power. [passage omitted]

Discusses U.S. Ties, Peace Moves

TA2202135591 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 22 Feb 91 p 14

[Interview with Yosi Ben-Aharon, director general of the Prime Minister's Office, by Hemi Shalev, on 21 February in Jerusalem]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Shalev] What are your conclusions from the incident over the remarks by Ambassador Zalman Shoval?

[Ben-Aharon] We are dealing with a [U.S.] administration that is not too sentimental, but one that is aloof, and it could even be said a tough administration. I do not wish to say by that that it is unfriendly, but it remains firm in its demands and does not hesitate to express them in a rigid and sometimes even harsh way. When the administration deals with something to which it attributes a lot of importance it has much less patience, is much tougher and demanding, and sometimes quite intransigent.

There was a rare combination of circumstances. The ambassador said what he said, and in normal times it might not have aroused such a sharp response, perhaps only a word of criticism. I think, however, that the matter is behind us and the telephone conversation (between Baker and the foreign minister) can be viewed as an expression of the U.S. desire to continue normally and to work with the ambassador as well.

[Shalev] Your name has been mentioned in that context, that you allegedly instructed the ambassador to activate the Congress against the administration's foot dragging.

[Ben-Aharon] That is not true. We must be very careful not to appear in the world as somebody working with Congress behind the administration's back over things that can irritate the administration. I learned that during my term in Washington. It just does not pay. Even if you have a majority in Congress against the administration, in the final analysis it is the administration that has the initiative over any political and constitutional move and the implementation of congressional laws. Anything that is viewed by the administration as going behind its back will boomerang against us; therefore, it is inconceivable that I would advocate such a thing.

In addition, we are talking about tactics. The embassy and the ambassador must do the work in the field. Here, we must not, we cannot, and it is also not wise to extend advice by remote control.

[Shalev] How do you explain the fact that your name was brought up so many times over that matter?

[Ben-Aharon] I think I have many friends, both in parenthesis and otherwise, and they credit me for all sorts of baseless things. It is not even worth talking about.

[Shalev] Do you guide the embassy on policy issues?

[Ben-Aharon] I have quiet close ties with the ambassador, in most cases at the instruction of the prime minister. I am also in close touch with the foreign minister's office. [passage omitted]

[Shalev] Has the talk about the cold war in the Middle East being over been premature?

[Ben-Aharon] Yes, I do not believe that we have seen the end of the cold war in the Middle East. All the signs emanating from Moscow—whether it is the characters who conduct policy and the moves or whether it is the tone and the nuances—remind us of the cold war. I would, however, add that currently matters in the USSR are quite volatile and, therefore, we must not reach final conclusions.

[Shalev] How do you assess the new order and the situation that will prevail in the aftermath of the war?

[Ben-Aharon] Prophesying is a dangerous business, and in the Middle East it is even stupid. We must first draw conclusions from this war, and on the basis of these decide what can and what cannot be done. I do not see conclusions being drawn. There are important lessons that all those involved should have learned, but they do not want to know about it. What stood out most was the immoral lack of restraint and the cynical opportunism displayed in the rush to develop unconventional weapons, with the assistance of many countries throughout the world.

I do not see any lessons drawn regarding the field of conventional weapons either. The craving for petro-dollars will not stop, and as long as these regimes keep on spreading petro-dollars to the East and the West, and as long as these regimes continue to be totalitarian, the dangerous arms buildup will go on.

[Shalev] Do you discern any signs that the Arab countries may change their position toward Israel in the wake of the Gulf war?

[Ben-Aharon] There has been a change, but it is too early to talk about it. Merely judging from the past, one can say that because of the nature of these regimes this war will definitely cause shock waves, and there will be changes. It is difficult, however, to forecast how good this will be for Israel.

[Shalev] There have been statements indicative of a change, for example those made by the Saudi Arabian ambassador to Washington.

[Ben-Aharon] There have also been such instances in the past. Every time an Arab state is in need of popular support or assistance from the West, it makes a gesture toward the Jews or toward Israel and slips a word to this or that minister who is currently visiting there. That minister hurries to publish it and thinks he just discovered America. We are quite experienced in this and do not lose our heads. The West, I am sorry to say, falls for this trick every time.

[Shalev] What about the PLO?

[Ben-Aharon] In that field I would also not rush ahead to draw conclusions. There were remarks made on that issue by the Egyptian foreign minister this week and Egypt is a leading Arab state, if only because it has a peace accord with Israel. There are now reservations in Europe about the PLO, but I have doubts; Europe might go back to their bad habits and not give us the time and opportunity to develop alternatives for negotiating partners.

[Shalev] The foreign minister said yesterday in the Knesset that the policy of "sit back and do nothing" is a recipe for disaster.

[Ben-Aharon] I do not react to statements by ministers, but in general it is all a question of what and when. It is sometimes better not to do anything because you thereby give your enemy a rope with which to hang himself. And there are times when you should take the initiative.

[Shalev] What period are we now in?

[Ben-Aharon] I think we should first explain to the United States and the other Western countries the issue of drawing conclusions I referred to earlier. If we succeed, the operational conclusions will also be in our favor. And then, if we prepare the ground, there will be a readiness to listen and also to consider. Whoever reads the remarks by Secretary of State Baker to the congressional committee two weeks ago sees that he raised more questions than answers, and that means that questions are also being asked by them.

[Shalev] You said the U.S. Administration is aloof. Will that not find expression also in political pressure being exerted on the government after the war?

[Ben-Aharon] Aloofness is not necessarily negative. Not always is the lack of sentiments a deficiency, sometimes it has advantages in negotiations. You have no illusions about those with whom you are dealing and about how to conduct negotiations with them. The United States acknowledges the State of Israel's status and strength: political, military, and international. Nothing can be imposed on Israel, various pressures can be imposed on us, but when that touches on an existential Israeli interest, and the issue of settlement is existential, then the room for maneuvering is quite small. In other words, we can give up minor and tactical things in order to receive something, but on basic things I do not think we will yield. I do not believe that aid will be endangered if we refuse this or that move.

I should also point out that our position has lately been strengthened. There are things the Americans are now hearing and which appear more reasonable to them. For instance, that we should make progress slowly and carefully, or that the credibility of the promises made by Arab governments is doubtful, or that the Palestinian problem is not necessarily the issue which should be given first priority. [passage omitted]

Levi: Government To Act According to Developments

TA2402061591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0514 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister David Levi by Dan Shilon—live]

[Text] [Shilon] Good morning, Minister Levi.

[Levi] Good morning to you.

[Shilon] What can you tell us about the telephone call you received from James Baker?

[Levi] As you already know, he said that he was calling to inform me personally of the U.S. decision to launch the offensive....

[Shilon, interrupting] What time was this?

[Levi] Sometime around 0500 [0300 GMT]. He said that this would be a combined operation and that the United States greatly appreciates Israel's behavior. I, of course, told him that this behavior stemmed from our considerations and responsibility, and you are familiar with the considerations and all their aspects. This will continue as long as it remains possible. Baker said that the United States is taking and will continue to take steps to eliminate the threat to Israel, adding that the United States greatly appreciates our behavior. He said that we are in this campaign together and that he expects this nightmare to pass quickly, so that we can meet and discuss matters of common interest to both our countries and further the peace process. I, of course, told him that I am also anticipating this and that I wish him, his countrymen, and the allied forces success in this battle, because Saddam Husayn has broken all the rules of human conduct. He has trampled every standard and every value and actually challenged all of mankind, and it is only natural that the United States lead all the defenders of freedom and liberty. We stand with them and wish them success.

[Shilon] When James Baker told you that the United States greatly appreciates Israel's restraint, did he also add that the United States is doing all the work and that Israel should not intervene?

[Levi] No, not at all. I think that his appreciation first of all underscores the fact that if someone thought that Israel has been weak during this conflict or shown hesitation because it cannot or does not have the option to act, he is wrong. They regard Israel's behavior as a manifestation of strength. In our last conversation several days ago, Baker also took pains to address this issue, and all our discussions always revolved around the need to foil the trap Saddam set for both the United States and for Israel. He wanted to portray the United States as the party doing the Zionists' work for them. This is what he continually repeats in his speeches. As for Israel, our considerations were correct and prevented him from turning this conflict—which is a direct result of his

aggression—into a holy war waged by the Arab countries against the Jewish state. Things should be viewed in this perspective and context.

[Shilon] Mr. Levi, this was true until last night, while the air campaign was under way. As of last night, the United States has significantly escalated the fighting. If the missile threat to Israel continues under the current new circumstances, will you recommend that the Israeli Government take action?

[Levi] You asked me this question in an interview several days ago, and I told you that any decision will be made according to developments. That was exactly what I told the Secretary of State last night. We are acting with restraint in accordance with our own decision, out of the very considerations I just specified a moment ago, and everything depends on future developments, with our security remaining the primary and most sacred consideration. The government carries out assessments and evaluates every step and decision accordingly; therefore, there is no decision in advance that Israel will not act under any circumstances, nor is there any decision calling for Israel to intervene no matter what happens. The government will make its decisions according to developments.

[Shilon] Thank you, Foreign Minister Levi.

AL-NAHAR Lauds Levi's 'Pragmatic Positions'

TA2202172091 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 22 Feb 91 pp 1, 7

[Editorial: "Between Levi and Shamir... About the Future"]

[Text] Despite the rising temperature in the Gulf war, we are observing that the postwar stage has already begun. If Washington has begun preparing for this stage, whether by planning to reconstruct Iraq and Kuwait and ensuring the security of the Gulf oil states, there are also many indications that Washington intends to pressure Israel to settle the Palestinian problem. Moreover, the Soviet Union, after a long absence from the Middle East arena, has returned to pursue its role as a superpower that has an impact on the region's future. Hence, the peace initiative proposed by President Gorbachev to stop the Gulf war.

Amid these speedy developments, the thing that attracts attention is what is taking place in the Israeli arena and the preparations for the postwar stage. Whereas Prime Minister Shamir insists on maintaining the status quo and refuses to make any plans to activate the peace process, we see that his deputy, David Levi, has rejected this position, believing that international circumstances and the situation in the region will prompt the international community, particularly the United States, to put forward initiatives that stem from their own convictions. This is a prescription for political disaster for Israel, as Levi says. He refuses to wait for others to present initiatives, and for Israel either to accept or reject these initiatives, then yield to foreign pressures.

Thus competition within the Likud Party has begun. The thing that has aggravated this disagreement is the visit paid by Minister Moshe Arens to Washington last week. This forced Levi to cancel his visit to the United States planned for this week. Levi believes that Shamir is biased toward Arens. Lately Levi has demonstrated pragmatic positions. At his recent meeting with his U.S. counterpart, James Baker, he gave a commitment that the Israeli Government would not build housing in the occupied territories for new Soviet immigrants in return for a loan guarantee by Washington amounting to $400 million. Washington's agreement on this deal came through yesterday. Levi also surprised everyone yesterday when he criticized Shamir's stance on peace and expressed his readiness to negotiate with any Palestinian, adding that Israel should not adopt the policy of a "spectator" with regard to achieving peace with the Arabs.

Anyone who studies Levi's previous positions realizes the extent to which his thinking has changed. His positions were more extreme than Shamir's. Last year he led a fight against Shamir's initiative on holding elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Thus his positions have become more moderate and objective. He is urging Israel to lead the peace process instead of being led by the United States.

Among the surprises which Levi triggered recently is the announcement that he is ready to enter into negotiations with Syria without preconditions, including the future of the Golan Heights. Shamir showed his displeasure at Levi's positions and sent a message to the Golan settlers assuring them that the Golan will not be a topic of negotiations. Shamir's disagreement with Levi is not due to personal hatred but because Shamir realizes that any initiative means giving up land in return for peace. Perhaps this is the reason that Shamir has distanced himself from Levi and has come closer to Arens.

Observers say that the Americans these days are making preparations to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict. The plan comprises several points: Israel must negotiate with the Palestinians as well as with the Arab states to end the state of war with it; also the convocation of an international conference on disarmament and economic cooperation between the region's states. This plan conforms in its basic guidelines with the plan being proposed by Levi.

In the coming days and months many changes will become apparent in the international arena and in our region. The situation will not return to what it used to be. If Levi realizes this, there are also many Israelis who hold the same view. What Levi is proposing will find a favorable response in the Arab states.

Shomron on Possible Iraqi Invasion of Jordan

TA2302105491 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0919 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Interview with Lieutenant General Dan Shomron, chief of the General Staff, by 'Adi Talmor; in Shomron's office on 22 February—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Talmor] Sir, there has been a public debate over the issue of an automatic reaction to the firing of missiles at Israel. Can one talk about an automatic reaction if Iraq moves troops into Jordan, or would such a development also call for sound judgment, in accordance with the scope and nature of the infiltration?

[Shomron] I stated in some previous interview that the term automatic reaction does not exist, unless you are talking about a machine or a robot. With human beings, particularly those who have a responsible job to do, every decision calls for sound judgment. I assume that in certain cases, Israel would have to act and react. Of course, the timing and nature of such an operation would be based on sound judgment, particularly in view of the fact that time is on our side as far as Iraq is concerned. From Israel's point of view, the situation is getting better by the day. In my opinion, this improvement will not last only a few days, but assures us a better future. Therefore, what is called for at this time is sound judgment regarding when and how to operate, so as not to thwart a process that is of utmost importance to us. Consequently, automatic reaction does not apply to people with a very responsible job to do.

[Talmor] In practice, could Iraq move a certain number of troops into Jordan without triggering an Israeli reaction?

[Shomron] Israel has said on more than one occasion—this has been reiterated by the defense minister—that it will not agree to Iraqi troops moving into Jordan. In my opinion, this is absolutely clear to the Iraqis and certainly to the Jordanians. The fact is that Jordan has repeatedly stated that it will not allow foreign troops to enter its territory. The statement was aimed at us, but also at Iraq, because Jordan knows that such a move could not be ignored.

[Talmor] Has Jordan met our expectations in this war, particularly in the last two weeks?

[Shomron] At this point Jordan is not taking action and is not allowing Iraqi troops to move in; I do not know whether the Iraqis are trying to move in. I think that as long as it does not allow foreign troops to enter its territory, Jordan meets our expectations.

[Talmor] The horrific scenario, if we may call it that, painted by former Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin this week proves that there is actually no military response to each and every problem and difficulty, and that if we do not attain peace with our neighbors, we may find ourselves facing the threat of mass destruction. Do you subscribe to this opinion?

[Shomron] I do not. I do not know exactly what he said, and I do not want to argue with what you are telling me he said.

[Talmor] Rabin was talking about the Syrian missile threat being greater than that of the Iraqis.

[Shomron] That is correct; however, both Syrian and Iraqi missiles do not pose a direct threat to Israel's existence. When and if we are faced with an eastern front, the main threat to Israel's existence will be posed by the combined ground and air forces, as well as by the missiles. The latter will cause damage and make things difficult, but they will not pose the main threat. Therefore, the Israeli Army is built, first and foremost, to defeat the forces that threaten its existence. Obviously, the missiles would disappear as a consequence, and we also have the answers to these missiles.

[Talmor] The Syrian missiles?

[Shomron] Both the Syrian and the Iraqi missiles. [passage omitted]

Secret Israeli, Iranian Talks Reported

TA2302133191 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] LE POINT in Paris reports that Israeli and Iranian representatives have held secret talks lately. The only detail known about the talks is that they were held in Germany. Our correspondent Gid'on Kouts notes that the content of the talks was not reported, nor is the identity of the participants indicated. This report has not been confirmed by any other source.

IDF Raises Alert in Preparation for Ground War

TA2202052791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has increased its state of alert in anticipation of the eventuality of the United States rejecting the Soviet proposal and launching a ground offensive, IDF sources told our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe. The sources believe that a desperate Saddam Husayn may launch missiles, including some outfitted with chemical warheads, from all his remaining launchers. The IDF continues to caution the public not to be complacent.

Two Iraqi Scud Missile Attacks Reported 25 Feb

Missile Fired From West Iraq

NC2502020391 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 0150 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] The Israeli Defense Forces [IDF] spokesman said a short while ago that all people throughout the country, except for residents of F area [not further specified], can remove their gas masks and leave the sealed rooms. IDF spokesman Nahman Shay added that a missile was fired from the west of Iraq at the F area, and that this missile fell in this area.

No Casualties, Damage Reported

TA2502020991 Jerusalem Voice of Israel and IDF Radio Network in Hebrew 0200 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] About 30 minutes ago, a Scud missile fell in southern Israel. There are no casualties, and so far there are no reports on damage of any kind. This was the 38th missile Iraq has fired at Israel, and it is the second time a Scud missile fell in the south. An all clear was announced throughout Israel, except in area F [southern Israel], where the residents are allowed to take off their gas masks, but are still asked to remain in the sealed rooms.

Country Cleared; Warhead Conventional

TA2502023691 Jerusalem Voice of Israel and IDF Radio Network in Hebrew 0215 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Statement by Brigadier General Nahman Shay, Israel Defense Forces spokesman—live]

[Text] All Israeli residents, including those in area F [southern Israel] may leave the sealed rooms. An all-clear has been declared throughout Israel. We have no reports concerning casualties or damage.

This was the 38th missile fired at Israel and the 17th missile attack on Israel. The missile was fired from west Iraq, from those launching sites used in the past. An all-clear siren will not be sounded, but the situation is all clear.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service and Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew split from the joint network and resume normal broadcast patterns at 0220 GMT.]

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0225 GMT carries an interview with the IDF spokesman Nahman Shay, who says: "Following tests in the area I can state that the missile had a conventional warhead."]

Second Attack Causes No Damage

TA2502041091 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0355 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Report by army affairs correspondent Amir Fink]

[Text] At 0530 [0330 GMT] this morning the second missile tonight hit the south. Both missiles were fired from west Iraq, both had conventional warheads, and both fell in open fields in the south. There are no casualties, and as yet no damage has been reported. So far, 39 missiles have been fired at Israel in 18 missile attacks. The search for the missile fragments will be renewed soon, as the morning light comes up. Naturally, an all- clear has been announced throughout Israel.

Iraqi Missile Said Answer to U.S. Ultimatums

TA2302202791 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1750 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with Dani Nave, the defense minister's media adviser, by Gay Zohar—live]

[Text] [Zohar] Dani Nave, the Defense Ministry's spokesman, we are turning to you with the following: There is some feeling of disappointment or perhaps anger over the fact that the Iraqis are launching missiles at Israel as a way of driving home a message to the entire world.

[Nave] Anger is surely the appropriate word to describe this incident. A short while ago we heard that London does not take a serious view of those diplomatic contacts, those so-called Iraqi signals [on a withdrawal from Kuwait]. We in Israel surely cannot take it seriously, since Iraq should be tested in deeds rather than in declarations or diplomatic feelers, and the Iraqi missile this evening clearly points to the fact that Iraq is ignoring the unequivocal U.S. ultimatums and continuing its policy of terror against Israel.

[Zohar] The question is whether the situation analysis we conduct in Israel indicates any change in the Iraqi policy. They talk of a withdrawal. Tariq 'Aziz was in Moscow and apparently accepted the compromise offered by the USSR. As far as Iraqi military deployment is concerned—do we notice any change toward Israel or any change in Iraq's aggressive intentions in general?

[Nave] Matters are known in general. Up until now the Iraqis have not expressed their clear willingness to accept the ultimatums announced by President Bush last night. As long as the Iraqis are not doing this, the meaning is clear: Any moment now the United States may launch the ground battle. There is no sign pointing to Iraq's readiness to meet the U.S. demands. It is impossible to point to such readiness as long as Iraq continues to try to hit the population in Israel. Luckily enough, there were no casualties this evening, but there could have been casualties. This is the Iraqi intention indeed: To cause casualties among peaceful Israeli civilians. As long as the Iraqis continue this policy, we cannot talk of true Iraqi readiness to end the war and accept the conditions which the United States had posed. As long as this terror policy continues, we cannot refer to any Iraqi change.

[Zohar] What about an Israeli reaction or a change in our defense policy in case the ground battle starts? There are increasing indications that the ground battle is about to start, perhaps even in the coming hours.

[Nave] We have been prepared for over a month now. The entire Israeli population was properly equipped for a possible chemical attack. People know how to conduct themselves. The instructions issued to them are clear,

and every time an alarm siren is sounded these instructions are followed. It is not necessary to have additional instructions. People know what to do, and should only continue to be alert. The missile which fell in Israel this evening proves that we must continue to exercise the same degree of alertness we have been used to for several weeks already.

[Zohar] Still, there is an attempt to return to normal currently, and perhaps the start of a ground offensive and an Iraqi defeat will require that we resort to some defensive means against possible suicidal moves by the Iraqis.

[Nave] It is not necessary to take any measures beyond those we have already adopted. If the Israeli population abides by all rules of alertness, it will be prepared for a possible nonconventional attack, which will hopefully not take place.

U.S. 'Commitment' To End Missile Threat Viewed

TA2402114791 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1108 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with Defense Minister Arens' media adviser Dani Nave by military correspondent Amir Fink; on 24 February—recorded]

[Text] [Nave] We naturally expect the effort toward the elimination of the threat western Iraq poses to Israel to continue. There is an American commitment to continue this activity, which has been pursued day and night and which will be continued in parallel with the ground war the Americans are waging in the Kuwaiti sector. They will pursue this activity day and night in order to foil the Iraqi attempts to launch missiles at Israel. There is a clear American commitment on this issue, which was discussed in Defense Minister Arens' talks in Washington last week and which continues to be discussed regularly by Israeli and American officials on various levels. The commitment exists and the activity will be pursued.

[Fink] Does the commitment involve a ground operation in these areas?

[Nave] I am not aware of this type of activity. At the moment, we know of constant U.S. Air Force activity against different western Iraqi targets from which missiles are launched at Israel.

[Fink] Would Israel like the United States to launch a ground operation in these areas?

[Nave] You will probably agree that I should not be giving the Americans advice, certainly not on the radio. There are ongoing contacts between us and the Americans over this issue.

Sharon on Scud Threat, 'Difficult Situation'

TA2102163291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 21 Feb 91

[Interview with Ariel Sharon, construction and housing minister, by reporter Roni Sofer in Beersheba on 21 Feb—recorded]

[Text] Construction and Housing Minister Sharon today said that Israel has the capability to help the Americans eliminate the Scud threat or to cope with it by itself. Sharon made this statement while visiting Beersheba, adding that an end to the Gulf war now would constitute a threat to Israel and to the entire world. Our correspondent Roni Sofer reports:

[Begin recording] [Sofer] If the United States believes that an Israeli operation in Iraq would get in its way, we must demand that the United States prevent the launching of missiles at Israel. This statement was made today by Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon while visiting Beersheba.

Minister Sharon added that Israel has the capability and the means to help the United States eliminate the Scud threat or to handle it by itself.

[Sharon, in English] If Sharon were asked what a small country like Israel can do that the United States, the main—or now the only—superpower, cannot do, I would say first of all we can do, we have an answer, we have a lot of experience.

[Sofer translates and continues] We use basically the same equipment and planes, and we are very familiar with this theater, Sharon said. Sharon also suggested that the United States divide the burden of sorties against the Scud missile launchers with Israel according to the hours of the day. Discussing the Soviet peace plan and the quasi-ultimatum given to the Iraqis prior to the start of the ground offensive, Ari'el Sharon asserted that if the war were to end now, the entire world, including Israel, would find itself in grave danger.

[Sharon, in English] We have been put in a very difficult situation. But if that will be the end of the war, it is very dangerous.

[Sofer translates, and continues] For example, I have heard no U.S. demand in the Security Council that along with their withdrawal from Kuwait the Iraqis will also be called upon to guarantee that they will never employ surface-to-surface missiles against Israel. Minister Sharon added that he believes that Israel received regular intelligence reports on what happened in Iraq over the past few years. Nevertheless, the minister criticized indirectly the use made of this information by the defense ministers who succeeded him.

[Sharon] The question is not whether there was information, because to the best of my estimate we received information all the time. The question is what happened

during these seven years and what was done with the information in our possession.

[Sofer] Minister Sharon summed up his statements by congratulating the U.S. soldiers fighting in the Gulf for the courage and determination they have shown in their battle against the Iraqi enemy. [end recording]

General Curfew Imposed on Territories 24 Feb

TA2402051891 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] this morning imposed a general curfew on Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. The regions have also been declared closed military areas. The move was taken to forestall disturbances.

Administrator Explains Curfew

TA2402183291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with Brigadier General Shay Erez, head of the Civil Administration in Judaea and Samaria, by Ya'el Dan and Gay Zohar—live]

[Text] [Dan] Good day to you, Brigadier General Shay Erez. Why did you decide to renew the curfew in the territories? As far as the Israeli civilian population is concerned, business is as usual, in fact, despite the start of the ground offensive.

[Erez] Our assessment was that the start of the ground battle might create pressures, which in turn might affect quiet in the region. Therefore, we imposed a preventive curfew as a preemptive measure. We are happy to note it was quiet today, and if this quiet lasts, we will begin to ease the curfew tomorrow morning, and will return to the situation which prevailed last week.

[Dan] What do you mean by pressures in the region?

[Erez] We had feared possible disturbances because of Iraqi casualties or as manifestations of solidarity with the Iraqis, and this is why we imposed the curfew.

[Zohar] There has been some increase in the number of incidents in recent days, is that so?

[Erez] There has not been a substantive increase. Quiet is observed on the whole. I would like to mention that a curfew is in effect at night, and that some of the regions where disturbances took place were subject to a curfew even before the start of the ground battles. The entire area is then quiet on the whole.

[Zohar] How bad is the economic distress in Judaea and Samaria currently, in the wake of the new arrangements involved in exit for work in Israel?

[Erez] The economic distress is substantial. It was big previously, too, and now it is very big indeed, also because of normal marketing problems. We did not have a good year from the viewpoint of rainfall, while 70 percent of the Judaea and Samaria residents are farmers! There were other problems, too. Nevertheless, the economic difficulty stems mainly from the fact that for a month and a half these residents were unable to come to Israel for work.

[Dan] How did the Judaea and Samaria residents today receive the news of the reimposed curfew?

[Erez] The residents did not like it. We, too, are not happy about it, but, in general....

[Dan, interrupting] How did they react? Did they try to rebel in any way?

[Erez] They did not try to break or violate the curfew. There has been no organizing or disturbances, nor have we heard any complaints. After three and a half months [as heard] of incidents, the residents, too, understand that relations with us have clear game rules. This is one of the rules.

[Zohar] Do we further load the tinderbox there with this preventive curfew, the use of which is becoming more frequent as it has indeed proven itself so far? The bad economic distress, and to a larger extent perhaps, the Iraqi defeat may ultimately be interpreted by the territories' residents as their failure, too.

[Erez] There is economic distress, as we have already said. We are feeling the pulse to the extent possible to locate extraordinary distressing situations and to prevent an explosion because of economic problems. We are aware of what is happening, and know that a bad economic problem may have a negative impact in the area. Therefore, for fear of reaching a catastrophe otherwise, we are trying to solve economic problems through our Labor and Social Affairs Ministry, through marketing abroad, through the operation of local plants, and through various kinds of donations. Still, in countering what I have just said with a negative public atmosphere in the wake of the Gulf events—support for Saddam Husayn and anything else deriving from them—we decided to adopt a curfew, which has proven itself thus far, and are making every effort to avoid anarchy.

Government Shows 'Pain, Anger' at Ground Attack

NC2402123191 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1205 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The official Jordanian spokesman has stated the following:

The Jordanian Government has received with much pain, anger, and denunciation the news of the ground attack against the Iraqi military forces that took place early today, at a time when brotherly Iraq and the Soviet Union have achieved tangible progress in achieving an honorable peace that ensures compliance with international legitimacy and opens the door for turning a new leaf that would end the bloodshed and save human life.

/Jordan has welcomed the Soviet initiative and appreciated Iraq's swift cooperation with it. Jordan sincerely feels that there is a genuine opportunity for achieving peace in the Gulf. On that basis, Jordan has begun holding contacts with many countries to urge that a meeting of the UN Security Council be held in order to restore the Gulf issue to that international forum as a prelude to taking concrete measures toward implementing UN Security Council Resolution No. 660, which is the most fundamental resolution issued by the UN Security Council with regard to the Gulf issue.

While Jordan feels deep disappointment over the fact that the allied forces have ignored the current consultations in the UN Security Council, it again underlines the need to concentrate on achieving a cease-fire and finding the appropriate mechanism, in an international framework, to implement UN Security Council Resolution No. 660 by peaceful means.

Jordan views this new aggression against brotherly Iraq as a violation of UN Security Council resolutions because Iraq has consented to withdraw from Kuwait.

Since the early moments of this crisis, Jordan has sought to spare the Gulf the woes of war, and it now feels much pain in the fact that matters have developed to this extent. Jordan, as it affirms its denunciation and condemnation of that aggression and expresses the anger of its people, calls on the international community to take firm action to stop the fighting immediately.

May God protect Iraq, give it willpower, and grant its valiant sons in these decisive moments the strength to confront and repulse the aggression, for Iraq is fighting in defense of its right and the future of its people.

Muslim Deputies Urge Striking at U.S. Interests

NC2502114991 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 0915 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] Amman, 25 Feb (PETRA)—Deputies of the Islamic movement the Muslim Brotherhood have urged Arab countries that have not participated in the aggression against Iraq to sever their diplomatic relations with the aggressive alliance countries, and urged Iran to assume its position in this showdown, especially as it raised the slogan of jihad and fighting the devil.

In a (?statement) issued yesterday, they called on the Arab and Islamic countries providing the hostile alliance countries with oil or gas, particularly Iran, Algeria, and Libya, to stop doing so immediately because it directly contributes to the aggression against mujahid Iraq. They also called for facilitating the passage of volunteers to help Iraq in all fields required by the battle, for the rejection of the unjust resolutions passed by the American security council [UN Security Council], and for lifting the siege on Iraq, noting that everyone who abides by these resolutions participates in killing Iraq's women, children, and eldery people.

They also urged every Arab and Muslim everywhere to strike at the American and allied forces and the aggressive countries' interests, because this is a real contribution to holy jihad against these tyrant forces.

The deputies called on the Arab and (?Islamic) peoples, whose governments are participating in the hostile alliance, to declare their anger and denunciation of their rulers' crimes, to revolt against this situation, and to declare civil disobedience to compel these regimes to withdraw their forces from the peninsula and point their weapons at the nation's enemies, not at their Arab and Muslim brothers of mujahid Iraq's soldiers.

King Thanks Hashemi-Rafsanjani for Peace Efforts

NC2302163791 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic GMT 0920 23 Feb 91

[Text] Amman, 23 Feb (PETRA)—His Majesty King Husayn last night sent the following cable to his excellency the Iranian president:

His Excellency 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In my own name and on behalf of the government and people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, it pleases me to send to your excellency sincere thanks and gratitude for the good efforts you have been exerting to end the Gulf war and reach a peaceful settlement for a conflict between two sisterly Islamic states.

It gladdens me in particular to mention with great appreciation your valuable contribution toward promoting these efforts and directing them toward crystallizing the Soviet peace plan, which we consider to be a truly outstanding achievement and a great positive step toward establishing peace and security in the Gulf, a peace which we all aspire to realize.

This peace plan and Iraq's acceptance of UN Security Council Resolution No. 660 have placed all the parties concerned without exception at the historical crossroads of choice between allowing this destructive war to continue with all that it entails of tragedies, disasters, and evil for millions of people, and between opting for peace

and reconciliation so the Gulf region would enjoy peace and stability and move toward progress and construction.

Your responsible stand and valued efforts, which emanate from your eagerness to preserve the supreme Islamic interests, will continue to be the focus of appreciation by all. We are certain that you will continue your good offices and we pray God to preserve you as an asset for your nation, grant you success, and help us carry out God's wishes. May God grant us success.

May God's peace and blessings be upon you.

[Signed] Your brother, Husayn.

Sudan's Al-Bashir Hails State Stand on Gulf

NC2202172391 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Before his departure from Amman, Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir [chairman of the Sudanese National Salvation Revolution Command Council] made a statement to reporters saying:

[Begin recording] [Al-Bashir] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. As a matter of course, our talks dealt with the current Arab situation and what is going on in the Gulf right now. I came to meet with my brother His Majesty King Husayn to discuss issues together and exchange views. God be praised, the views were 100 percent identical. The positions of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan are honorable. They have brought honor to all Arabs, from the Ocean to the Gulf. Likewise, they have brought honor to the entire Islamic nation. We are all aware of the dangers posed to fraternal Jordan, and of the fact that fraternal Jordan is targeted. In spite of all this, however, Jordan has not for a single moment thought of selfish or transient interests. Its prime concern has always been to safeguard the Arab and Islamic nation and its causes. This honorable position has dictated that we in Sudan respect this position, and that we come to meet his majesty the king to gladden our hearts with his meeting, and to listen to his opinions and directives. God be praised, time has shown that the position of Jordan, as well as the positions of the Arab states advocating the attainment of an Arab solution is the sound one. Now, the world is converging to support this position, God willing.

[Unidentified reporter] if the determination to destroy fraternal Iraq by the allied countries continues to be shown, what would be the position of the Arab states that rejected the foreign presence in the first place?

[Al-Bashir] These countries should not have remained idle. Since the start of the crisis on 2 August, we have not been mere spectators. That is because we were aware that the objective of the entire conspiracy is to destroy Iraqi capabilities since they gave the Arab and Islamic nation the hope that the nation's prime objective of liberating Palestine would be realized. This makes it incumbent on all honorable Arabs to take a stand that will guarantee this nation's security, cohesion, freedom, and independence. [end recording]

Seen Off by King Husayn

NC2202165691 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Sudanese National Salvation Revolution Command Council, left Amman at noon today following a two-day visit to Jordan, during which he held talks with His Majesty King Husayn on the latest developments of the Gulf war and the efforts currently under way to resolve the conflict through peaceful means.

His Majesty King Husayn led those who were on hand to see the Sudanese leader off. Among those who also saw the Sudanese leader off were His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the prime minister, the Senate president, the chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, the king's political adviser, the chief chamberlain, cabinet minister, the chief of staff, a number of senior officials, and the Sudanese ambassador in Amman.

The two leaders reviewed the guard of honor, which was lined up to greet them. Then the band played the national anthems of both Jordan and Sudan.

Consignment of Gasoline Received From Syria

NC2302235891 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Prime Minister Mudar Badran has said that Iraq's acceptance of the Soviet plan calling for an unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait affirms Iraq's desire for peace.

In an interview with REUTER, he added that the allied countries' rejection of the Soviet peace plan will lead to the inflammation of the Middle East region. Asked to comment on Washington's and London's rejection of the amended Soviet proposals and their insistence on the Iraqi forces' initiation of withdrawal from Kuwait by no later than 1900 Amman time today, the prime minister said: This means the ground war will begin, that the entire region will flare up, and that the number of victims on both sides will be more than we can imagine.

He expressed his belief that the Soviet plan is an opportunity which, if missed, will lead to a great catastrophe. He said Jordan has held contacts with nearly all the Arab countries to warn against the dangers of war, and that Jordan is in touch with a number of other countries, including the Soviet Union and the EC countries.

He said he believes that, with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz's acceptance of the eloquent Soviet proposals that are in complete harmony with Security Council Resolution 660, the ball is now in the alliance's court, and that if the alliance's aim is to pull Iraq out of Kuwaiti territory, then this has been achieved.

Commenting on the U.S. demand that Iraq complete the withdrawal of its forces from Kuwait within one week, the prime minister noted that military experts describe this as impossible. He said the principle of withdrawal from Kuwait has been established, and that it is the Security Council's duty to supervise this withdrawal and place neutral forces between the two sides. He said: If the aim is the withdrawal from Kuwait, I do not see a difference between one week and three weeks, because, as anyone knows, any military withdrawal, from the practical point of view, is very difficult to implement within one week. He asserted that Jordan wants peace to dominate the region, and that the withdrawal will be effected. If a chance is given to the Soviet initiative, then withdrawal—the Security Council's goal—will be accomplished, he added.

Meanwhile, the prime minister announced that Jordan today received the first consignment of the 30,000-tonne quantity of gasoline it ordered from Syria. He said that a line of credit has been opened with the brothers in Syria, and that Jordan has begun receiving the shipments. He added that Syria has agreed to sell Jordan 30,000 tonnes of gasoline at market price, and that this deal is being carried out according to an extendable contract. Once measures to facilitate the loading of tanker trucks in Homs are complete, he noted, Jordan will begin receiving crude oil shipments. He said a recently purchased tanker began receiving a cargo of 100,000 tonnes of crude oil at a Yemeni port today, and is expected to arrive at the Red Sea port of al-'Aqabah by the end of this month, noting that it will be docked there for use as a storage ship. He pointed out that Jordan has not received a single oil tank truck from Iraq for two weeks now, because of the air raids on the highway and the damage inflicted on the Iraqi [oil] installations.

Badran Briefs House on 'Aziz Talks in Amman

JN2502093091 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Feb 91 pp 1, 2

[By 'Abdallah Hasanat, JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz left Amman Sunday morning after a stop over in Jordan en route from Moscow to Baghdad, Prime Minister Mudar Badran told a closed session of Parliament Sunday afternoon, deputies said.

Mr. 'Aziz held talks with His Majesty King Husayn and Jordanian officials and briefed them on his Moscow talks and Iraq's acceptance of the Soviet initiative, Mr. Badran told deputies.

He quoted the Iraqi foreign minister as telling Jordanian officials that the Soviets had assured him that they would exert all efforts possible to put an end to the war and bring peace to the region.

Mr. 'Aziz asked Jordan to continue its efforts to find a political solution to the Gulf conflict, the prime minister said. "All that Iraq needs from Jordan is for the Kingdom to press on with its political efforts to end the war," Mr. Badran quoted Mr. 'Aziz as saying.

According to Mr. Badran, Mr. 'Aziz left Jordan by road early this morning for Baghdad, the deputies who attended the secret session said.

They said that Mr. Badran also told them that he believed the aims of the U.S.-led alliance were to destroy Iraq's state infrastructure, its industries and to topple its leadership.

According to the deputies, the prime minister said the allied bombardment of Iraq and especially Baghdad resulted in the destruction of the country's factories, power plants, water stations, roads and public buildings including the presidential palace.

"There is not a single factory in Iraq that has been spared bombardment. The coalition forces bombed every factory several times to make sure it would not function," Mr. Badran quoted Mr. 'Aziz as saying.

He said that while the allied bombardment of Iraq resulted in the death of 7,000 people in the first three weeks of war, only 100 Iraqi soldiers were killed in raids on Iraqi troops in the first 20 days of aerial bombardment.

Mr. Badran assured the deputies that Iraq had the capabilities to sustain and repulse the allied ground attack.

The Parliament session started with sharp exchanges between the deputies who wanted to speak on the war and Speaker 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyat who for some time insisted on following the session agenda.

After Mr. 'Arabiyat consulted the prime minister on whether he wanted a closed or open session, Mr. Badran said: "If it was closed it would give us more freedom." After that the speaker declared the session closed and journalists and spectators left the chamber.

Tunisian Medical Missions Leave for Iraq

NC2502125891 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 0920 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Amman, 25 Feb (PETRA)—The Jordanian Red Crescent's 10th medical mission left Amman for Baghdad yesterday.

Dr. Muhammad [other names indistinct], vice president and director of relief operations in the Jordanian Red Crescent, said the mission is made up of 14 volunteers, including three doctors and three male nurses, and that the mission is equipped with 28 tonnes of medicine, medical equipment, and baby food.

He added that mission head Dhahir al-Hadid will deliver the consignment of medicine, medical equipment, and baby food to the Iraqi Red Crescent.

He said that a Tunisian Red Crescent medical mission is accompanying the mission and that the Jordanian Red Crescent has provided all the necessary facilities for the arrival of the mission to Baghdad to carry out its humanitarian functions.

Dr. al-Hadid affirmed that the Jordanian Red Crescent is ready to receive donations from Arab citizens and all humanitarian organizations and convey them to the Iraqi Red Crescent. He noted that the Jordanian Red Crescent (?began) to convey messages to the Iraqi Red Crescent, inquiring about Jordanian citizens' relatives in Iraq.

The Tunisian Red Crescent's medical mission is headed by Dr. 'Abd-al-Jalil al-Zawas, professor of surgery at Tunis University's medical college.

Dr. al-Zawas said the mission consists of 23 doctors and nurses, including nine surgeons, three anesthesiologists, and three internists. He added that the mission will operate a mobile hospital in Iraq to help the Iraqi Red Crescent conduct humanitarian tasks in the wake of the American aggression against Iraq, and to provide medical services for the children, women, and elderly people who have been wounded as a result of the hostile bombardment.

He noted that the Tunisian Red Crescent equipped the mission with all the requirements to operate a field hospital for two months, and that the mission has six tons of medicine and medical equipment. [passage omitted]

Iraq Seen Having No Option But To Fight

JN2402085691 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Feb 91 p 4

[Editorial: "Limits of Beastly War"]

[Text] President George Bush's ultimatum to Iraq to pull out on humiliating terms is nothing but an obstinate move aimed to abort Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's peace initiative. If Washington's true objective is to intimidate Iraq into submission, then all the blood and destruction that would ensue from such a policy will have to be the responsibility of the U.S. and its allies. The tone and contents of Bush's ultimatum are drafted in such a way as to leave Iraq no choice but to continue to defend itself against the allied aggression. And with Washington's aims so clearly going beyond the liberation of Kuwait, it is up to the Soviet Union and all free, peace-loving nations to stand up to this Western design with equal determination. Moscow and the Soviet president can ill-afford such humiliation at the hands of Washington and President Bush. What is at stake here is not only Iraq but also the so-called new international order which appears now to be totally at the mercy of Washington's White House. Iraq is, and remains, to be a Third World country that cannot be expected to stand up to Western tyranny. If Iraq is allowed to succumb to such a tyranny with Moscow and Peking and other powerful capitals simply gazing with indifference into the sky, then they could be next on the West's list of countries that need to behave or otherwise face the consequences. Now is therefore the time to put an end to this rule of the jungle where the strong and the warmongers call the shots and the others must bow with disgrace and humiliation.

Unfortunately, neither the Arab countries opposed to the Gulf war nor the non-Western capitals are making their voices heard strongly enough. In the face of this deterioration in the international order, all concerned countries, especially the Soviet Union, must stick to their guns at the U.N. Security Council to pre-empt and resist the whims and dictates of Washington. Above all it is incumbent on the Soviets to back their words and agreements with deeds and actions that can put an end to this beastly war immediately. The Soviet Union cannot possibly afford to relinquish its role as an honest broker and arbiter on behalf of the Third World countries, especially at this hour and in view of the massive effort that it has already exerted on behalf of peace in the Gulf.

Meanwhile, Iraq has no alternative but to persevere and defend itself at whatever cost. We know from experience that Iraq will not capitulate. It has accepted terms for honourable peace and will continue to adhere to its word, regardless of the odds. For their serious endeavours and huge sacrifices to save for the Arabs their dignity and integrity, the Iraqis can only be respected and supported without limits. This is a crucial hour for the whole world, especially Arabs, to realise what is at stake here.

Paper Alleges Mutiny by King Husayn's Guard

PM2202131191 London AL-ZAHIRAH in Arabic 19 Feb 91 p 1

[Unattributed "exclusive" report: "For Fear of Palestinian Tendency's Seizure of Hashemite Throne: Mutiny in King Husayn's Secret Guard!"]

[Text] Amman—Informed Western diplomatic sources in the Jordanian capital have revealed the occurrence of an armed mutiny within King Husayn's secret guard recently following the outbreak of "Desert Storm." The reason was the fear of a group of senior secret guard officers belonging to Jordanian tribes of the growing Palestinian influence in the Jordanian arena and the dangers to the Hashemite regime of the disgraceful support for Saddam Husayn.

The sources add that the cities of al-Mafraq and al-Zarqa' witnessed armored movements by secret guard units toward Amman in an attempt to besiege increasing Palestinian demonstrations, for fear of an onslaught against the Royal Palace following a rumor circulated on the Jordanian scene about the Jordanian king's siding with Saddam Husayn and the possibility of an Israeli attack on Jordan.

King Husayn formed the secret cells of his special guard from the sons of the Jordanian tribes. He promoted their officers and sent them on training missions abroad following the "Black September" massacre against the Palestinians, in order to be a nucleus for a Jordanian response in the face of the growing Palestinian presence, which constitutes the majority of his kingdom's population. The Jordanian king entrusted his special guard with serious tasks such as operations to assassinate opponents and those who demand democratic rights and parliamentary life symbolically introduced in Jordan last year.

Western diplomatic circles reveal that some fundamentalist elements have infiltrated King Husayn's special guard cells, are growing rapidly, and are attracting elements loyal to them from among low-ranking officers and soldiers. The objective is to stand against the Palestinian tide, which has started to head events since the Gulf crisis erupted.

The Jordanian capital is silent about the occurrence of violent military clashes between the the armored formation belonging to the special secret guard and a group of Palestinians armed with Kalashnikov rifles and hand grenades on the highway between al-Mafraq and al-Zarqa', which resulted in a large number of people from both sides being killed or wounded.

Western diplomatic sources in Amman point out that King Husayn hastened to send military groups to besiege the mutiny area and arrest the senior officers, who had received no military instructions from the Royal Palace to move toward the capital.

The sources add that the reasons for the armed mutiny by King Husayn's secret guard was their command's fear of a coup by Palestinian fundamentalists to topple the Jordanian throne, especially after he had appeared hesitant toward Saddam Husayn. This was in addition to the risk of an Israeli attack during possible strikes against Saddam's strongholds by Israeli bombers, namely when they penetrate Jordanian airspace in a later stage of "Desert Storm" or when Iraqi fighter aircraft penetrate Jordanian airspace in sorties against Israel, thus placing him in a trap between the two sides.

Bomb Explodes Outside French Bank

NC2202190791 Paris AFP in English 1840 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Beirut, Feb 22 (AFP)—A small bomb exploded Friday outside a French bank in northern Lebanon, causing slight damage to the building, while in Beirut police defused another bomb 15 minutes before it was set to go off outside the Italian Cultural Institute.

The first incident involved several sticks of dynamite, placed outside the door of the Banque Libano-Francaise in the port city of Tripoli, police said.

France and Italy are members of the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq.

The Italian center—located in the same west Beirut building housing Agence France-Presse—has been closed since January 20 following a rocket attack against the Italian embassy.

There have been 21 attacks or attempted strikes here against the interests of countries belonging to the anti-Iraqi coalition since the start of the Gulf war on January 17.

One man has been killed and four have been injured, all of them Lebanese.

Further on Italian Center Bomb

NC2202202991 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] The Lebanese security services this afternoon defused a small bomb planted outside the entrance to the Italian Cultural Institute in Beirut, which has been closed since the start of the Gulf war.

The bomb consisted of 40 grams of TNT and was attached to a primitive timing device, which experts defused 15 minutes before it was set to go off.

French, Italian Abductions Linked to Drugs

NC2302165791 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Excerpt] To shed light on the report published by the newspaper AL-DIYAR a week ago on the abduction of two Italian and French nationals in the southern suburb [of Beirut], exclusive information received by Radio Free Lebanon at noon today says the two foreigners were kidnapped by the two Shi'ite clans, the al-Mistrah and Birru families. According to preliminary information, the abduction is linked to drug trafficking.

The two foreigners reportedly headed for the house of Ibrahim al-Mistrah at the first floor of Birru building near Radio Cinema in Burj al-Barajinah on 16 February. Since that date, nothing is known about their fate. The information indicates a quarrel erupted between the Birru and al-Mistrah families and each one accused the other of being involved in the abduction. A Birru family member raised the matter to Minister As'ad Hardan who intervened on 19 February 1991, attempting to obtain a share from the disputed drugs, but to no avail.

Husayn 'Izz-al-Din, who participated in the hijacking of a TWA airliner to Beirut years ago, tried to inquire from the Birru and al-Mistrah families about the destiny of the two abducted persons, but to no avail. Then, security forces stormed many houses belonging to the al-Mistrah and Birru families in Burj al-Barajinah. During an operation against Husayn al-Mistrah in al-Raml al-'Ali, the security forces clashed with the al-Mistrah family, killing two. Thirteen persons were detained, among them being Ibrahim al-Mistrah and Mustafa Birru. Meanwhile, the fate of the two kidnapped persons is still unknown. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Returns From Tour, Comments

Future Stability Stressed

NC2102125791 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 21 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Faris Buwayz, minister of foreign and expatriate affairs, has asserted that Lebanon's main issue is now the liberation of the South from the Israeli occupation and the unconditional implementation of Security Council resolutions.

Yesterday, upon his return from a tour of France and Italy, Buwayz said: [Begin recording] Any evaluation of the visit should be based on its primary objects. We visited France, the Vatican, and Italy in response to invitations from the Italian and French Governments. We raised several issues.

First: Lebanon's stability in the postwar period and the assertion that any future system or any international setup will look into the liberation [as heard] and implementation of the Security Council resolutions concerning the liberation of South Lebanon and the Israeli Army's withdrawal from the South;

Second: We discussed a number of issues regarding bilateral relations, including development projects and French and Italian aid. This point has two aspects, the first being the direct French or Italian assistance, and the second is the role of France and Italy in the EC and the likelihood of the acceleration of previously approved aid.

The authorities of the countries we had visited were completely responsive. We also sensed a conviction that Lebanon has reached a new turning point, which allows and encourages the launching of several development projects in Lebanon. [passage omitted].

Italy has decided to release a previously approved loan of $100 million and to add a further loan worth $100 million. This does not mean, however, that a particular project will be proposed in the coming days or weeks. Also, [word indistinct] additional loans or the possibility of additional loans. It is likely that we may reach multiple figures if we make applications in this respect soon. [end recording]

'Awn Issue Reviewed

PM2202133991 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 22 Feb 91 p 12

[Telephone interview with Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz in Paris by Hafiz Mahfuz in London; date not given: "Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz Tells AL-HAWADITH: Lebanon's Map Is Final; Specter of Partition Has Vanished"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Mahfuz] Did you agree with the French Government on certain steps regarding General 'Awn?

[Buwayz] I was told by the French Government, especially by President Mitterrand, that the matter of Gen. 'Awn was not a condition of relations between France and Lebanon. They are too deep to be affected by circumstantial events. The French president raised the subject not from a political viewpoint but only from a legal viewpoint, on the grounds that France granted 'Awn political asylum and hoped that Lebanon would respond to that request. I promised to convey the French wish to the president of the republic, the prime minister, and the government. The importance of that proposal is that it comes from the president of the French Republic, who is eager to establish the best of relations with Lebanon.

Any potential solution to the Gen. 'Awn question must take account of the following points:

The financial aspect: Gen. 'Awn has large sums of money totaling tens of millions of dollars, and these belong to the state. He had issued a decision allowing him and members of his government and family to transfer these sums from public accounts into personal accounts. These sums must be returned to the Lebanese state;

The political aspect: This concerns Gen. 'Awn's past links with Iraq and Iraqi and Palestinian intelligence. These links pose a threat to state security;

The legal aspect: The former Lebanese government referred Gen. 'Awn to the Council of Justice, and Lebanon adheres to its institutions, through which that question should pass in accordance with legal rules;

Our state is young; the second Lebanese republic is in the formation phase, and our Army has not completed its reorganization process. It should be taken into account that Gen. 'Awn was the Army commander, and thus has information about and friendships within the military establishment.

Any solution must take account of these considerations. We promised to brief France on developments in that question. [passage omitted]

[Mahfuz] Will President al-Hirawi embark on an international move to implement Resolution 425?

[Buwayz] We are following the development of international events and waiting for favorable conditions to launch such a move. My visits to France and Italy are a preparatory action in support of that aim.

[Mahfuz] How is the government handling the problem of the ministers who have resigned or are staging a boycott?

[Buwayz] Negotiations are being held with them, broaching not the political principle but agreement over the means and details. In these negotiations the state is playing a liberal role in order to accommodate all within the framework of national accord.

[Mahfuz] Is disbandment of the militias a final decision, and is it nearing implementation?

[Buwayz] Disbandment of the militias is part of the al-Ta'if agreement, the state's policy, and the government's structure. It is an important government aim. It is a ramified subject; preparations are currently being made to realize it as a fundamental aim. [passage omitted]

[Mahfuz] How do you see Lebanon's future, and has the specter of partition vanished, or is it still there?

[Buwayz] Lebanon's map is final; its regime is final, and freedoms and democracy within it are final, because they are part of Lebanon's fabric. These are fixed principles, and all other matters are details. The state's sovereignty over all its territory will be firmly extended through accord and national unity. Be assured that the specter of partition has vanished. If partition were meant to happen, it would have happened during the 16-year Lebanese war. It has been proven that Lebanon is immortal and unpartitionable. The world has learned that it is better to have a wounded Lebanon than no Lebanon at all. With its outstanding steadfastness, Lebanon deserves to live. Its prosperity and stability will be restored to it.

Army Deploys Units to Greater Beirut 21 Feb

NC2202073491 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Yesterday, a battalion of the Army's 9th brigade deployed in new areas in al-Ashrafiyah and its approaches. Also, within the framework of consolidating the Greater Beirut Plan and security there, another battalion of the 5th Brigade deployed in al-Dawrah and its environs.

In another development, UN and Lebanese military officers convened a meeting and agreed that the Army will not send troops to the areas where the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon is stationed, as such a deployment requires a UN Security Council resolution.

At noon yesterday, Army Commander General Emile Lahhud visited positions of the 5th and 9th Brigades, and other brigades and units in greater Beirut. [passage omitted]

Army Consolidates Mlikh Position, Removes Mines

NC2202074091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Lebanese army units continue to consolidate their positions in Southern Lebanon and Western Al-Biqa' with hardware and troops. Security reports mention that the engineering corps have completed most of the task of removing the mines in Mlikh area which is adjacent to the occupied security strip. Some inhabitants of Mlikh were also allowed to return to their homes and properties.

Gorbachev Phones Al-Asad on Gulf Peace Effort

NC2302170291 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received a telephone call from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev this afternoon. Conversation revolved around the Gulf issue and the Soviet efforts to find a solution and avert an escalation of the situation.

President al-Asad appreciated the Soviet Union's efforts to avert tragic military developments, especially for Iraq. The president also noted Syria's efforts since the beginning of the crisis to avoid arriving at this difficult situation, including the president's message to the Iraqi president.

Although these efforts had been timely and sought to spare Iraq much suffering, they did not meet with the required response. The two presidents agreed to continue the contacts.

Egypt's Mubarak Calls

NC2302072991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received a telephone call yesterday from President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, during which they discussed developments concerning the Gulf issue.

Commentary Says Calls, Appeals Now Useless

NC2402162491 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: It is not difficult to imagine what is happening in the Gulf despite the partial media blackout accompanying the start of the ground offensive today to reclaim Kuwait and expel the Iraqi forces.

The issue does not require a vivid imagination, especially since the expectations, analyses, warnings about the outcome, and calls to avert it which preceded the attack did not leave much scope for imagining the result of the grinding ground battles on Kuwait's territory today.

Observers and political analysts could concentrate on the length of this battle or the tactics followed to reach the objectives. However, the first and last concern gnawing at the heart of every Arab as he follows reports of the fighting can be summarized in one word: Why?

Why is all of this blood being shed? Why are all of these losses, destruction, and ruination taking place? The blood being shed now over Kuwait's land is our blood. We always sought to preserve and protect it. God, the world, and all Arabs know how much effort Syria made to convince the Iraqi leadership to avoid this unholy bloodshed. The destruction befalling Kuwait and Iraq is a bleeding of Arab resources, potential, and capabilities. No one can deny how much we in Syria, as well as other Arabs who care about these Arab resources and potentials, have sought to prevent their bleeding in such a useless confrontation.

All the efforts, attempts, calls, appeals, and pleas to stop this bloodshed and preserve the resources and potentials are collapsing, however, so that the doors to the hell of grinding ground battles will open, which alone will determine the destiny of this wrong and unequal confrontation that Iraq's ruler chose for Iraq with the whole international community.

How much we hoped that after five weeks of costly and destructive confrontation, after the start of operations on 17 January, that the Iraqi leadership would accept advice and declare its immediate withdrawal from Kuwait without any conditions or restrictions to salvage what has remained and not implement what took place. Arrogance and obstinacy continued, however, until the very last moment. Even a superpower like the Soviet Union, despite all of its efforts, could not prevent the current explosion. In fact, it can find no alternative to holding the Iraqi leadership responsible for anything that happens later and washes its hands of the outcome.

The Iraqi army and people, nay the whole Arab nation, are now paying the price of the Iraqi leadership's stubbornness, obstinacy, arrogance, and egoism. They are paying the price through the blood of their sons fighting in the Gulf, their resources which are being devoured by fire, and the destruction of the developed installations, institutes, and monuments they built with the sweat and arms of these sons.

The problem now is that despite the size of the crisis, these arrogant, obstinate, and belligerent people are still looking for a hook on which they can hang all their mistakes and sins. They are now portraying themselves as victims of the slyness of others, thus revealing true stupidity regarding the tribulations they have subjected Iraq to and no desire to learn from the examples of everything that has happened or continues to happen.

After all this, no call asking that obstinate leadership to retrieve its sanity can be useful. No appeal can be beneficial. All calls and appeals have become futile. Iraq's army and people are now confronting the catastrophe that their leadership forced on them with much conceit and vanity after it decided to continue the mistake and sin it started by invading Kuwait and bolstered later on through its successively thoughtless stands.

Iraq Termed 'Biggest Winner' if Peace Achieved

NC2202182091 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: If the entire world has any interest in establishing peace in the Gulf and stopping the war on

the basis of UN resolutions, then Iraq, by any rational estimation, has a greater interest, even if this chance for peace has come after five weeks of suffering and hardship for the Iraqis resulting from a futile confrontation over which they have no power or authority.

If Kuwait regains its sovereignty, legitimate government, and independent authority on matters related to the Kuwaiti people and their destiny, and restores by force of arms the status it enjoyed before 2 August, it is also true to say that Kuwait's sovereignty, legitimate government, and independent decisionmaking would be restored even if the war went on and the ground battle began—the battle for which preparedness has reached its zenith in the past few days—regardless of how high and dangerous the cost might be. As for Iraq, it will find itself the biggest winner if peace is achieved now. Iraq's gain, however, would have been even greater had it accepted before the fighting erupted to withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait. Had Iraq done so, this would have spared it a huge material asset which has been destroyed. Iraq would have also spared the lives of many of its sons and soldiers who fell in a battle that was, right from the very beginning, clearly hopeless and fruitless. When Iraq withdraws from Kuwait now in compliance with UN resolutions, it will come closer to international law and the law of justice and peace, after it has rebelled against international law in the past months as a result of its occupation and annexation of Kuwait and its refusal to withdraw.

Perhaps the hours we and the world are living now are the hours of the final race between peace and war, with no going back, after the ongoing international peace efforts have reached a critical point whose pendulum is swinging either in the direction of peace, which could have been achieved by the Iraqi Government throughout the past months, or the direction of war, which the Iraqi Government could have also prevented. In addition, the entire world has become unanimous on the principle of unconditional withdrawal as a basis for peace, because such a withdrawal constitutes the ABC's of any solution which can restore rights to their owners and put an end to aggression. Furthermore, because the interests of Iraq, its people, and Army is part of our and the nation's interest, and because Iraq, from the pan-Arab perspective—in which we strongly believe—is part of our and the nation's security, when we exert any effort for Iraq, its people, and army, we have always hoped to see Iraq respond to international will and unambiguously declare its withdrawal from brotherly Kuwait so as to correct the mistake that has overburdened the Iraqis and subjected the nation to dangers it has never before witnessed. This is because only such an unequivocal response can save Iraq from the abyss and spare it the road of undoubted massive destruction.

The outcome of pursuing the war is known in advance; likewise, the outcome of responding to the call of peace is known according to every sound estimate of what has happened until now, and what might happen. If Iraq opts for peace now, it will win, and the whole nation will win the safety of its sons and soldiers and what is left of its energies and resources. It is the last option which admits nothing short of a complete answer, and which will be cleared up only through the clear, smooth road of withdrawal from Kuwait without any condition or hesitation.

Afghanistan

Rebel Group Joins Government Ranks in Faryab

LD2302212891 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] A 10,000-man group led by Reza Khan Alkozai, consisting of 4,300 armed and 5,700 unarmed men, took position in the ranks of defenders of the homeland yesterday in the area of Qaysar district, Faryab Province.

The Bakhtar Information Agency military section reported that this group was welcomed by Lieutenant General Mohammad Joma Asak, the general operational commander of the north zone; the leadership delegation of Faryab Province; a large number of ulema, clergy, and elders; and peace-loving people of Qaysar District.

At a meeting held on this occasion, the general operational commander of the north zone spoke about the peace-seeking measures taken by the government of the Republic of Afghanistan for the restoration of nationwide peace in the country. He recalled with appreciation the praiseworthy action taken by the above group in stopping the fratricidal war.

The ringleader of this group then spoke on behalf of the others and said that he was working with all his ability for the restoration of peace and security, as well as thorough implementation of the humane and Islamic policy of national reconciliation. This group, which had been operating within the extremist Rabbani group, were equipped with heavy and light weapons. Following their support for the policy of national reconciliation, the security of 26 villages of Qaysar District was restored and the people resumed their peaceful life.

Economic, Commercial Accords Signed With USSR

LD2502070991 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0515 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] Kabul, Feb. 24, BAKHTAR—Five documents out of nine, which were agreed upon during the work of the Soviet economic and commercial delegation in Kabul with the Afghan side were signed here today by the representatives of the concerned RA [Republic of Afghanistan]-USSR ministries.

A source of the RA Planning Ministry reported to BAKHTAR that during the signing ceremony, Ghulam Mahiyuddin Shahbaz, planning minister, Zakim Shah commerce minister and deputy ministers of planning, commerce, finance and agriculture and president of DA Afghanistan Bank and B.N. Pastukhov Soviet ambassador to Kabul were present.

The documents, the source added, which [were] signed today are on continuation of consultation services on gratis basis for year 1991, delivery of gratis aid to Jowzjan Province through Soviet share in the Salam project programme, relative postponement of payment of delivery of equipments and machinery during the year 1991, continuation of Soviet selfless assistance in utilization and protection of technical system of the Salang tunnel as well as Soviet gratis aid for a number of the RA's high-ways.

The other four documents, the source adds, in regarding exchange of goods between the RA-USSR, delivery of goods to the RA free of charge for the year 1991, Soviet selfless assistance through the Salam project for struggling against locust and other harmful insects and protocol on the postponement of debts to be paid in 1991 including tax for five coming years have been prepared which will also be signed in the near future.

Najibullah Approves Passport Law Amendment

LD2002232591 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] The press office of the Presidency reports that the decree of esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, on giving assent to the legislative decree of the Council of Ministers about the rescinding and amendment of some articles of the passport law has been issued with the following text:

In accordance with Article 104 of the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan, I give assent to legislative decree no. 56 dated 19/9/1369 [10 December 1990] of the Council of Ministers on the rescinding and amendment of Articles 11-15 of the Passport Law. The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Afghanistan is assigned to present for approval the above decree with amendments and rescinded articles to the first session of the Meli Shura. The legislative decree along with rescinded and amended articles shall be sent for publication in the Official Gazette to the Ministry of Justice.

Signed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan.

Bangladesh

Awami League Says Rivals Responsible for Violence

BK2502114091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1132 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] Dhaka, Feb 25 (AFP)—The Awami League accused rival groups Monday of causing sporadic clashes ahead of Bangladesh's first free elections this week.

"We fear that certain groups were resorting to violence in an attempt to systematically disturb the voting" on Wednesday, league spokesman Nurul Islam told reporters at the home of party chief Sheikh Hasina Wajed.

He said Sheikh Hasina has ordered supporters to remain alert but calm and added, "we fervently hope there will be no serious law and order situation."

He did not name the rival parties who he alleged were planning violence during the voting but said the government should check the "armed activities" of the Freedom Party (FP).

The FP is headed by retired Colonel Faruq Rahman, who led the bloody 1975 coup which toppled the Awami League regime of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Sheikh Hasina's slain father.

The spokesman said six league workers had been killed and more than 100 arrested since January in connection with poll violence, but lauded caretaker President Shahabuddin Ahmed for taking "satisfactory steps" in promising free elections.

In a separate news conference Monday, Abdul Mannan, a local hopeful of the rival Bangladesh National Party (BNP), said he would defeat Sheikh Hasina bagging 75 per cent of votes in a direct contest.

The BNP candidate, a retired army major who faces Sheikh Hasina in one of Dhaka's prestigious constituencies, accused the Awami League of irregularities.

"The Awami League activists have damaged many of our campaign booths in Tejgaon-Ramna constituency and were also intimidating voters," he said.

AFP Reports 'Major Crackdown' Before Elections

BK2502091591 Hong Kong AFP in English 0828 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] Dhaka, Feb 25 (AFP)—Soldiers patrolled Dhaka and other cities Monday as police pursued a major crackdown on troublemakers in Bangladesh two days ahead of parliamentary elections.

Contingents of soldiers were seen with assault rifles and machine guns moving through Dhaka streets and narrow alleys as electioneering here reached fever pitch.

The deployment of the army, notorious for its involvement in previous elections, came amidst an electoral provision which allows the military to help police only in an event of large-scale poll-related violence.

There was no official word on the deployment in the national capital, the nearby counties of Haluaghat and Keraniganj, and remote districts such as Raozan in Chittagong.

Police in Chittagong said two people were killed and 10 injured Sunday night in an election-related clash in Raozan, where four homes belonging to minority Hindu voters were also burned.

Military sources in Dhaka said the army has also been also deployed in Rangpur, the hometown of ousted President Hussein Mohammad Ershad whose Jatiya (National) Party which is contesting 271 of the 298 seats up for grabs.

"The deployment is just a show of force to anti-social elements who may try to start trouble during elections," explained a police official by telephone.

"No pictures please," an army commander told an AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE photographer in old city Bangshal district, but he later relented as his convoy snaked through streets filled with political rallyists.

The army deployment follows a nationwide police crackdown on troublemakers ahead of Wednesday's parliamentary polls, police said.

"We will not allow any violence this time," said Bangladesh police chief A.M. Chodhury, adding that his officers recovered some illegal firearms from the detained men.

The crackdown followed a warning Sunday by caretaker President Shahabuddin Ahmed that his interim government will not tolerate any violence during Wednesday's balloting.

Sources said "hundreds of roughnecks" were arrested in the crackdown, adding that the measure also aimed at allaying fears of large-scale vote rigging during the elections, the country's first under a neutral administration.

"We have picked up all the listed anti-social elements," Mr. Chodhury said.

At least 14 people have died since December in violence linked to Wednesday's polls in which the 62-million electorate have been promised the first peaceful election in Bangladesh's 20-year history.

Political parties have said the army should step in only if large-scale violence flared during election time.

The Bangladesh Army has been previously accused of rigging parliamentary elections in favour of at least two former presidents who had risen from military ranks, including Mr. Ershad.

A total of 2,774 candidates, mostly belonging to 70 parties, are contesting the country's fifth parliamentary elections. Some 400,000 security personnel have been deployed by the interim government in a bid to keep the polls clean.

Main contenders include Mr. Ershad's longtime bitter rivals, Sheikh Hasina Wajed of the Awami League and Begum Khaleda Zia of the Bangladesh National Party.

200 Injured in Poll Clashes Near Dhaka

BK2302165391 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] In Bangladesh, at least 200 people were injured in clashes between political parties contesting next week's general elections. The clashes took place at Demra, a town near Dhaka and the southeastern port city of Chittagong. According to police sources, supporters of

the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Awami League fought with each other in both the towns.

AFP Reports on Election Campaigning

BK2202025491 Hong Kong AFP in English 0205 GMT 22 Feb 91

[By Nadeem Qadir]

[Text] Dhamrai, Bangladesh, Feb 22 (AFP)—For politicians vying to win next week's parliamentary elections, life in this small sub-district in central Bangladesh begins when the sun sets.

During the day several campaign booths of competing groups in the main bazaar use loud speakers to draw people to their camps for a cup of tea and urge eligible voters to side with them in the all-important parliamentary election February 27.

But at night is when the real action begins.

"We start hectic campaigning after sunset when the voters return home from the fields and hold rallies sometimes after midnight," said Mohammad Kiamuddin, a worker in the booth of Sheikh Hasina Wajed's Awami League candidate, Benazir Ahmed.

A farmer himself, he said others were too busy preparing the ground and sowing rice saplings to have time for politics during the day.

"They first have to think of their stomachs and then elections," he said.

Mohammad Niamat Ali, 55, a supporter of Begum Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), said his candidate Ziaur Rahman Khan was going from door to door to seek votes and planned to hold a rally after sundown.

Mr. Ahmed and Mr. Khan are the two main contenders in the area, 27 kilometers (17 miles) from the capital Dhaka.

Mr. Kiamuddin said the candidates were forced to stay up all night to reach those they want to represent.

"You cannot find the candidates now as they are all sleeping," he said with a laugh.

In one firewood shop at the main bazaar, Nayan Biswas, 70, waited for a customer.

"Oh, you are campaigning for elections. Which party?" He asked in surprise as a reporter approached him.

"Yes, I will vote definitely ... I am looking for the right man," he said.

Asked which party he was going to vote for, he repeated it was the candidate and not the party that was important to him.

Most others interviewed in the sub-district's main bazaar said the person was more important in their decision than the party, but they said it was a hard choice to make because the two main contenders had worked for the people.

Residents complained that supporters of ousted President Hussain Mohammad Ershad's Jatiya Party (JP) were using scare tactics to force people to vote for their candidate Dewan Nazimuddin Manju.

"The JP people called us several times and tried to convey the message that we will face consequences if their candidate failed to win," one elderly resident said.

Residents also alleged that some disgruntled JP workers had changed their affiliations and were using the same tactics for the BNP.

Both the BNP and the Awami League have sponsored several former JP members, party sources admitted.

The sub-district has a strong Hindu population of about 30,000 and residents said most of them would vote for the league.

Asked why he would vote for the league, Hindu businessman Bhola Nath Banik said, "My father did before and I am following him ... My other relatives, too, have told me to do so."

Political observers said one main reason the Hindus would vote for the Awami League is its stand on secularism. The BNP stresses Islam, Bangladesh's state religion.

Eighty-five per cent of Bangladesh's 110 million people are Moslems and some 6.2 million are expected to vote in the coming polls.

Government Welcomes Soviet Peace Plan

BK2202125291 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Bangladesh has welcomed the Soviet peace plan for the Gulf war. In Dhaka Friday [22 February], Foreign Affairs Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed said Bangladesh hopes that all parties concerned will now move in the spirit of reconciliation to end the hostilities in the Gulf.

Iraqi Acceptance Welcomed

BK2302164491 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Bangladesh has welcomed the acceptance of the Soviet peace plan by Iraq designed to end the Gulf War. News agency UNB (UNITED NEWS OF BANGLADESH] quoting a Foreign Office spokesman says willingness of Baghdad to withdraw troops unconditionally from Kuwait is a positive development toward ending the crisis. The Foreign Office spokesman said this will lead to a peaceful resolution of the problem. Bangladesh supports all moves to bring about a peaceful

political solution of the crisis in compliance with the Security Council resolutions seeking complete withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and restoration of the legitimate government. The spokesman said Bangladesh stands for liberation of Kuwait, but not the destruction of Iraq.

Spokesman Reiterates Call for Iraq To Withdraw

BK2402161091 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Bangladesh has reiterated its call for the Iraqi withdrawal unconditionally from Kuwait, honoring the wishes of the international community.

Briefing newsmen in Dhaka today, a foreign office spokesman said Bangladesh has supported all peace initiatives even at a late stage hoping this would stop further loss of life and destruction.

India

Shekhar Comments on Cabinet Expansion, Gulf War

BK2302165691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] The prime minister has indicated that the expansion of his cabinet will take place any time during the current session of Parliament and it could be in a couple of days also. However, he ruled out any such exercise tomorrow.

Talking to newsmen, who accompanied him on his daylong visit to Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, Mr. Chandra Shekhar said he has not consulted his colleagues about the expansion so far. The prime minister also informed that the full budget session of Parliament is likely to be held either in the last week of May or the first week of June.

On midterm polls, Mr. Chandra Shekhar said the time is still not ripe for it. Elections could be held, if all want though he will not take a lead in the matter.

Answering a question on the stability of his government, the prime minister said it has its inherent weaknesses because of its minority character. That does not mean it will be (?inhibited) from taking important decisions for the good of the country. Mr. Chandra Shekhar said he does not claim to have brought about any impressive results during the last three months in office, but what has been achieved is reduction in tensions and creation of an atmosphere for talks on various problems.

On Punjab, the prime minister said the government has received some response from individuals to his invitation for talks. But they are in a position to claim to represent any particular section though they feel that the Punjab problem should be solved through dialogue.

On the Gulf war, Mr. Chandra Shekhar hoped that the United States will not launch ground offensive and will consult its allies to bring an end to the war.

Answering a question about Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's Gulf peace mission, he said anyone who can break the ice should be encouraged.

Devi Lal Rules Out Merger With Congress-I

BK2302125791 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] The deputy prime minister, Mr. Devi Lal, today ruled out the possibility of a midterm poll to the Lok Sabha. Speaking to newsmen in Belgaum, he also ruled out the possibility of his party's merger with the Congress-I.

On the question of formation of a national government at the center, Mr. Devi Lal said the idea was mooted by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee; Congress-I leader, Mr. Vasant Sathe; and the Janata Dal president, Mr. S.R. Bommai and he had merely supported it.

Mann Dissolves All Units of Akali Dal Factions

BK2302094191 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] The Shiromani Akali Dal president, Mr. Simranjit Singh Mann, has dissolved all units of the Badal and Longowal factions of the Akali Dal. Although these factions have already merged with the Akali Dal-Mann, the state- and district-level units had not been dissolved so far. The decision was taken yesterday at the end of the two-day meeting of the Shiromani Akali Dal working committee at Amritsar.

Talking to newsmen later, the party general secretary, Mr. Ram Singh, said a resolution adopted at the meeting asked the government to pave the way for talks with the militants.

Muslims Fire Rockets at Kashmir UN Office

BK2302170091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1645 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] New Delhi, Feb 23 (AFP)—Suspected Muslim militants tried to fire rockets at a United Nations office in the northern Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said Saturday.

The rockets aimed Friday night at the U.N. military observer group's offices in the state's summer capital of Srinagar, missed the target, PTI said quoting a police spokesman.

They followed up the rocket attack with gunfire, but nobody was injured and no damage reported.

It was the first attack on the U.N. office by Muslim militants fighting for Kashmir's secession from India.

The military observers monitor the situation across the line of control dividing Indian- and Pakistani-controlled parts of Kashmir, disputed by the two countries since the subcontinent's independence from British rule in 1947.

Pakistan Urged To Stop Aiding Kashmir Terrorism

BK2402043091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] India has asked Pakistan to stop aiding and abetting terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. Speaking at the session of the commission on human rights in Geneva yesterday, the leader of the Indian delegation, (Mr. Kapil Sibbal), refuted Pakistan's allegation of violating human rights in the Kashmir Valley. He said that the presence of security forces in the state is for the purpose of protecting the people from acts of terrorism instigated from across the border. Mr. (Sibbal) said that the allegations against India were fabricated and unfounded.

Pakistan Said Pursuing Nuclear Weapon Program

BK2302091191 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] India is of the view that Pakistan is pursuing a clandestine and weapon-oriented nuclear program. In this connection, the official sources in New Delhi have referred to the claims made by the Pakistan Nuclear Energy Commission chief, Mr. Munir Ahmed, that Islamabad does not process or intend to produce nuclear bombs. The sources said that the statement by itself does not suggest any amendment in Pakistan's nuclear policy.

V.P. Singh Berates U.S. for Ultimatum to Iraq

BK2302162991 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] The former prime minister, Mr. Vishwanath Pratap Singh, has said that the U.S. ultimatum to Iraq has come as a rude shock and tends to sabotage the Soviet peace plan. In a statement in New Delhi, he said the ultimatum is likely to interpret the aim of the U.S. and its allies as humiliation and destruction of Iraq and not its vacation of Kuwait.

Embassy in Baghdad 'Relocated' to Tehran

BK2402091391 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The Indian Embassy in the Iraqi capital has been relocated in Tehran. A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry said that the mission was shifted as there was a breakdown in telecommunications and water and electricity supply in Baghdad. He said the embassy would be moved back to Baghdad from the Iranian capital after conditions in Iraq improved.

Delhi Reports Nonaligned Mission Aborted

BK2402130291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The start of the ground offensive has forced the Nonaligned Movement to abandon its peace mission to Baghdad. The foreign ministers of Yugoslavia, India, Iran and Cuba, who were earlier to go to Baghdad are meeting in Tehran today. Meanwhile, India and Iran have called for intensification of efforts to restore peace. This follows a meeting between the deputy minister for external affsirs, Mr. Digvijay Singh, and the Iranian foreign minister, Mr. Velayati in Tehran.

India has deeply regretted the launching of the coalition ground offensive despite efforts by the Soviet Union, India, China and other UN Security Council members to find a negotiated settlement to the Gulf crisis. In a statement, the Government of India said the position taken by some members of the council made it impossible for the body to fulfill its functions. The statement expressed anguish at the consequences of the ground war, saying it will lead to further devastation of Kuwait and Iraq and large-scale loss of innocent lives.

Saudi Minister Arrives in New Delhi 24 Feb

BK2502035491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] The Saudi minister of state, Shaykh Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, arrived in New Delhi from Islamabad last night with messages from King Fahd for the president, Mr. Venkataraman, and the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, on the development in the Gulf.

Saudis Urged To Resolve Gulf Issue Peacefully

BK2502092991 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] India has told Saudi Arabia that war does not solve any problem and even now it is not too late to resolve the Gulf conflict by peaceful means. This was conveyed by the president, Mr. Venkataraman, to the special envoy of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, Shaykh Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, when he called on him in New Delhi today.

Iran

President Receives Gorbachev Call on Gulf Crisis

LD2302213991 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev spoke to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani on the telephone for 30 minutes Saturday night about the latest developments in the Persian Gulf, and on ways of achieving an end to the war. According to the Central News Unit, in the telephone conversation Gorbachev referred to steps taken in recent days and, referring to the importance of the

Islamic Republic of Iran's role in assisting the efforts for ending the Persian Gulf war, he said: In regard to the recent Persian Gulf crisis, we have had constant and beneficial contacts with your country, and we praise your positive and useful role in the peaceful resolution of the crisis.

The Soviet president expressed the hope that, with the assistance of nonaligned countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran will be able to find a peaceful means of ending the war. Gorbachev added that, in view of the lack of progress in his talks with the U.S. President, he has had contacts on Saturday with the heads of France, the UK, Italy, and Germany, which can play effective roles in ending the war, and he said that he will continue these efforts.

Gorbachev referred to the Soviet proposal for holding an emergency UN Security Council session to examine the current situation and to adopt a principled and peaceful solution to end the Persian Gulf war and once again asked for the greatest possible effort by the Islamic Republic of Iran in this regard.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed gratitude for the telephone call from Gorbachev, praised his peace efforts, and said: We have been following your excellency's efforts in recent days. Our country's president stressed: The Islamic Republic of Iran will intensify its efforts to bring an end to this ruinous war, and, on Sunday, we will ask the special committee of the Nonaligned Movement, which is meeting in Tehran, to concentrate all its efforts on this matter. Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: We believe that, to prevent bloodshed and to show its good will, Iraq must take a practical step toward withdrawing from Kuwait and thereby remove the U.S. and allied forces' excuse. The allied forces, too, need to lay the groundwork for that withdrawal by adopting a positive attitude.

According to the report, at the end of the telephone conversation the two countries' presidents expressed satisfaction about the growing trend of technical cooperation between the two countries and emphasized further cooperation.

[Tehran IRNA in English at 2041 GMT on 23 February adds in a Tehran-datelined report: "Lack of progress in his talks with the U.S. President on the Persian Gulf peace plan has made Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev contact several heads of governments Saturday including President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. In a 30-minute telephone conversation with Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani tonight, Gorbachev spoke of 'lack of progress' in last minutes negotiations with George Bush regarding end to hostilities in the Persian Gulf. He said as part of his peace efforts he was calling on countries which can play an 'effective role' for a peaceful solution to the U.S. war against Iraq."

President Comments on Regional Security

LD2402181191 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The president, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, during a meeting today with the provincial governors-general from across the country, stressed the policy of encouraging production in society and added: By adopting this policy, we have managed, so far, to solve many problems, including the cash [rial] problem, and the government currently does not have a cash problem. The soaring growth of liquidity [naqdinegi] has been stopped and production centers have become active and the flow of internal products to the market is growing in such a way that hoarders no longer benefit economically. The president, elaborating on the economic situation, said: In economic issues we must move toward moderation, and this is the way that has been chosen. At the moment, the delayed schemes have become active, and the building materials situation is much better than last year. An improvement is noticable in trasportation, though it is still a problem.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: Our confidence, our confidence on investment, is improving and the banks are in good shape. The market is less agitated and the industries' financial structure is improving. Exporting industrial products has commenced and in many instances double pricing and its consequent corruption has vanished and the move toward single pricing continues. Many of the tangled administrative knots in the path of commerce and production have been unraveled and hairpin bends have been straightened or are being straightened.

The president, recalling the past problem of exports, said: By removing many of the obstacles in the path of exports, products now can be easily exported.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, referring the role of the Ministry of the Interior in carrying out elections, stressed the importance of sound elections and the complete impartiality of officials and added: In elections, the people's vote is what is sought and violators will be dealt with.

The president stressed Iran's principled policy in international issues and recalled the interest of the world's countries in forming ties with the Islamic republic. He said: Many of the regional states have come to the conclusion that without Iran, regional security will be impractical.

The president then answered the governors' questions on many issues. Before Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani's remarks at the meeting, which was also attended by the deputy interior ministers and Tehran's mayor, the interior minister, Mr. Nuri, submitted a report to the president on the govenors' conference in Tehran.

Cuba's Malmierca Arrives For Nonaligned Meeting

NC2302111991 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca arrived in Tehran last night and was welcomed by Mr. Velayati. Speaking to our correspondent, the Cuban foreign minister said he had come to Tehran as a member of the Nonaligned Movement in search of a solution to end the Persian Gulf war, adding that he hopes to travel to Baghdad as well. Mr. Malmierca noted: With the cooperation of other Security Council members, we have presented some proposals to settle the crisis, the main feature of which is Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait. We think that Iraq's acceptance of the Soviet proposal has increased the prospects of peace. The U.S. rejection of the proposal, however, leads us to conclude that the United States is pursuing the larger objective of domination over the region, rather than securing an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

Regarding the Nonaligned Movement's efforts to end the Persian Gulf war, he said: Members of the Nonaligned Movement should play a role in this regard and continue their efforts, even after an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait is achieved.

Velayati, Nonaligned Foreign Ministers Discuss War

LD2402113591 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] On the threshold of the coordination session of the foreign ministers of the four Nonaligned Movement [NAM] member countries in Tehran, the supervisor of India's Foreign Ministry met our country's foreign minister, Mr. Velayati, this morning. They discussed the critical situation in the Persian Gulf. The supervisor of India's Foreign Ministry, having remarked on the important role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Persian Gulf region, also expounded on his country's stance in the face of the current war in the Gulf.

Mr. Velayati for his part stressed the need for increasing international efforts, namely by the NAM and other influential countries, for attaining a peaceful solution for halting the Gulf war.

According to a Central News Unit report, Cuban Foreign Minister Malmierca also met our country's foreign minister, Mr. Velayati, in this connection this morning. They discussed the agenda of the Belgrade session's select committee. Having remarked on the start of the ground war launched by the U.S.-led multinational forces and the worsening of the situation in the region, the Cuban foreign minister said: In this session we must initiate efforts to put a stop to the war and bloodshed as soon as possible. He added: What is disconcerting is the departure of the multinational forces' operations from the framework of the UN Security Council resolutions.

For his part, Mr. Velayati expressed his concern over the current situation in the region, adding: Unfortunately we are currently facing the worst possible situation, and we must focus our comprehensive efforts on finding a solution for a rapid end to the war.

It should be noted that the select group of the NAM foreign ministers plans to leave for Baghdad following its session in Tehran to exchange views with Iraqi officials on the war.

President Meets Nonaligned Delegates

LD2402233891 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The special NAM [Nonaligned Movement] committee consisting of the foreign ministers of Yugoslavia and Cuba, the deputy foreign minister of India, and our country's foreign minister, who met in Tehran for the purpose of finding a peaceful solution to halt the current war in the Persian Gulf, met with the president, Mr. Rafsanjani, on Sunday night.

In this meeting, first the Yugoslavian foreign minister, Mr. Loncar, as representative of the country that is the president of NAM, offering the warm greetings of the Yugoslav president, submitted a report on the special quadripartite session to our country's president, and added: Keeping in mind the mission given to us by the movement's 15 member states in the Belgrade session, we have held useful and constructive discussions in Tehran. We praise your excellency's special efforts to halt the war and regret that, despite every effort, a new development has occured in the war and the ground offensive has been started by the allies.

He stressed: We are hopeful that NAM's efforts at this stage bear results and that we succeed in halting the war. He added: In this regard, we are ready to visit Baghdad and believe that the Islamic Republic, and you personally, will have a unique role in maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Then the Cuban foreign minister and Indian deputy foreign minister, Mr. (Malmierca Peoli) and Mr. V.C. Singh, each, while separately conveying the warm greetings of the Cuban president, Mr. Castro, and the Indian prime minister, expressed their profound concern over the new regional situation and the expansion of the war and called for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait and the departure of foreign forces from the region. They also thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran's [IRI] efforts and requested guidelines from our country's president.

Then, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, expressing thanks for the new impetus of the NAM and the quadripartite session in Tehran, praised the presidents of Yugoslavia and Cuba and the Indian prime minister for their support of the movement and added: Your expression of readiness to visit Baghdad is a sign of this movement's seriousness, and I am sincerely thankful for this action. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, referring to the many efforts by the IRI before and after the war for the prevention and nonexpansion of the war, said: Many efforts were

made so that it did not come to this, but unfortunately, as a result of Iraqi's miscalculations, who considered the probability of war to be insignificant, the advice and intercessions offered by us and some other states were ineffective and they realized the miscalculation and showed flexibility when it was too late.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: In the past few days, for the umpteenth time, I sent a message for the Iraqi president through Mr. Tariq 'Aziz and stressed the contents of former messages and I believe that America and the allied forces must be deprived of the pretext because they, with calculated capacities, struggle step by step for objectives other than the eviction of Iraq from Kuwait. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani continued, expressing the hope that, until the NAM special committee reaches Baghdad and becomes acquainted with the realities of the new situation, more efforts be made to end the crisis. He stressed: The main objective of your work must be the halting of the war. The president, referring also to the division of tasks that was done in his telephone conversation with Mr. Gorbachev, stressed such efforts.

Delegates Await Baghdad Invitation

LD2402191791 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1827 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, 24 February (TANJUG)—Foreign ministers of Yugoslavia, Iran, Cuba, and India will leave for Baghdad tomorrow if during the night Iraqi President Saddam Husayn sends a message to Tehran informing the foreign ministers that he is ready to receive the four-member peace delegation from the Nonaligned countries, which met in Tehran today. This has been decided at a meeting of the foreign ministers of these four countries, which was held late this afternoon.

The consultative meeting was chaired by Budimir Loncar, Yugoslav federal secretary for foreign affairs, who said conditions for actions to be taken by the Nonaligned countries are curreatly completely different from those that existed at the time of the recent ministerial meeting of a group of Nonaligned countries, which was held in Belgrade.

In Yugoslavia, currently chairman of the Nonaligned Movement, a decision was made that a peace mission should visit Iraq in order to try to find a political solution to end the war and the Gulf crisis. The start of the land offensive, however, has brought into being different circumstances, and it is logical that the Nonaligned Movement is now trying to find in an ad hoc manner the most appropriate way to do something in the newly created situation.

Different views were voiced today in Tehran. Cuba and India, for example, believe they should go to Baghdad regardless of whether Saddam Husayn sends an invitation or not. Yugoslavia and Iran, whose standpoint was accepted in the end, believe the journey must have a justifiable and realistic goal: talks with the Iraqi president, to whom it would be said loudly and clearly that the war can be brought to an end only if he does what he has not done so far, and that is withdraw unconditionally and without delay from Kuwait.

The beginning of the land offensive for the liberation of the occupied emirate has also put the mission of the Nonaligned countries in a delicate position.

The Nonaligned are nevertheless not refraining from peaceful action, but now, as the land offensive has begun and after other peace initiatives have failed, the question is in what direction it should be channeled.

Late this evening, members of the mission from the nonaligned countries were received by Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. He had talks with the ministers on the possibilities of the Nonaligned Movement resolving the dramatic crisis in the region.

Baghdad Visit 'Cancelled'

LD2502072691 Tehran IRNA in English 0722 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 25, IRNA—The scheduled visit to Baghdad of members of the special committee of the Non-Aligned Movement [NAM] was cancelled due to "technical problems," an informed source at the Foreign Ministry told IRNA here Monday.

The committee which included foreign ministers of Iran, Cuba, Yugoslavia and acting Indian foreign minister was scheduled to leave here for Baghdad Monday morning to discuss peace proposal with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn.

The NAM committee will convene here this morning to examine issues related to the Persian Gulf crisis and peace initiatives to end the current war in the region and also to adopt a final decision on the NAM future activities with regards to the crisis, the source added.

The committee members in a session here Sunday reiterated the need to direct all efforts towards halting the war through diplomatic means.

Austrian Foreign Minister Mock Arrives for Talks

NC2302112691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock arrived in Tehran this morning at the head of a political-economic delegation which includes some of Austria's leading businessmen and was welcomed by our foreign minister, Mr. Velayati. Speaking to our correspondent at Mehrabad Airport, Mr. Mock said that he will discuss the expansion of bilateral relations in the political and economic fields during talks with our country's officials.

The Austrian foreign minister hailed our country's stance on the regional situation and added: Austria supports Gorbachev's peace plan.

Velayati, Mock Hold News Conference

AU2502150491 Vienna Domestic Service in German 1100 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Michael Kerbler report on a press conference by Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock in Tehran on 23 February; Mock statements in English]

[Text] It has been learned from the people around [Iranian Foreign Minister] Velayati that a spectacular change in Iraq's attitude is hardly expected. We must face the fact that the ground assault—as terrible as it will be—can hardly be prevented, a diplomat said, who attended the two-hour Iranian-Austrian round of talks. And Foreign Minister Alois Mock added:

[Begin Mock recording] Time is running out. And probably there is only one real and realistic way to avoid that the ground forces will start to attack—that means, stick very clearly to the substance of the UN resolutions, that means total, immediate, and really unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. [end recording]

Valuable time is passing, and there is really only one thing more that might prevent the ground assault—fulfilling the spirit of UN Resolution 660 without any ifs, ands, or buts. Iraq must withdraw from Kuwait unconditionally, completely, and immediately.

The impression that both ministers rather expect the outbreak of the ground war than Iraq's giving in was intensified by the fact that the larger part of the talks focused on the time after the Gulf war. In the interest of the region and of world peace, after the end of the war the following essential issues have to be clarified, according to Foreign Minister Mock:

First, plans for a future stable security order in the Gulf must come either from the region itself or must be implemented only with the approval of the states affected—in no case can they be dictated from outside.

Second, all troops of foreign powers must leave the Gulf.

Third, the Israeli-Arab conflict must be solved.

Iran's Foreign Minister Velayati announced that, on the basis of UN Resolution 598 of 1988, which demands peace and conflict-settlement talks between Iran and Iraq, he will propose some kind of security council for the region, which will include the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Iraq, and Iran. There is no doubt that Iran, which has gained reputation not only in the Islamic world because of its neutral attitude in the Gulf war so far, wants to play a leading role in the Middle East as a strong regional power. However, 'Ali Akbar Velayati affirmed again in view of the obviously unavoidable ground assault by the Allies that if Israel gets involved in the fighting and attacks an Islamic state, Iran will not be able to remain neutral and to look on indifferently.

Further on News Conference

LD2302142491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Following the meeting of Austrian Foreign Affairs Minister Alois Mock, Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, the two countries foreign ministers took part in a news conference this morning elaborating on the latest developments in the Persian Gulf crisis.

The Austrian foreign minister said: During the meeting with Mr. Velayati, detailed discussions were held about the situation resulting from the peace efforts of Mr. Hashemi Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. He added: We have decided that, in order to end the crisis, Iraq should withdraw from Kuwait unconditionally. As time is ticking away, there is only one way of stopping the ground attack. That is an immediate and quick Iraqi withdrawal. If that does not happen, then military operations will begin in a few hours.

He said: In our opinion, peace and friendship should be established in the Persian Gulf region. In addition to reviewing the proposed plans by countries of the region, basics for preparing an international conference on the Middle East should be put on the agenda.

Mr. Velayati said: As you know, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani's plans, and the letters exchanged between the presidents of Iran and Iraq, have created a great deal of hope for strengthening peace in the region. Of course, attention should be paid to a few principles regarding the solution of the crisis. One is the plan for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait; another is the plan for foreign forces to leave the Persian Gulf region; yet another is that regional states should maintain the security of the region.

He added: Many similarities exist in Iranian and Austrian viewpoints for solving the crisis. While maintaining our neutrality vis a vis the crisis, we will continue our peace-seeking efforts.

Referring to no toleration of Israeli attacks on Islamic states, Mr. Velayati stressed: We will welcome any peace plan for the region. As Tariq 'Aziz has announced, peace is important to us.

Our country's foreign affairs minister, responding to a question on if ground war begins would actions toward establishment of peace stop, said: We will continue our peace-seeking efforts. Any plan not including the countries of the region is futile. If foreign forces remain in the Persian Gulf region, peace will not be established under any circumstances.

President Receives Mock

LD2402114891 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani received Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock this morning. During the

meeting, the Austrian foreign minister expressed pleasure about meeting our country's president and conveyed the warmest greetings of the Austrian president. He said the Austrian president, government and nation have been deeply moved by his excellency's positive policies during the recent events in the Persian Gulf, and added that Austria is certain that the policy of neutrality and the other actions of his excellency's government about the recent issues have added to Iran's credibility.

He submitted a report on the positive talks held with our country's officials and expressed the Austrian Government's willingness to take part in reconstruction. He called for the expansion and deepening of mutual cooperation.

Finally, he outlined Austria's views on solving the deep-rooted problems in the region, including the Palestinian issue, and informed our country's president of his government's willingness for further consultation with the Islamic Republic of Iran about regional and global issues.

According to a Central News Unit report, President Hashemi- Rafsanjani voiced his satisfaction about the fresh initiative for cooperation between Iran and Austria, and expressed his thanks for the warm greetings of the Austrian president. He stressed the need for cooperation and consultation between the two countries in fields of mutual interest.

Expressing concern about the beginning of the allied land operation, despite all the efforts to prevent it, he said that at the outset Iran made every effort to convince Iraq to leave Kuwait, which unfortunately bore fruit too late. If the Iraqis had heeded our call sooner, things would not have gone this far, he said. After Iraq was convinced, the Americans, who had other ideas, pursued their aims by making excuses.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that in a contact with Mr. Gorbachev, last-ditch efforts were made, and they each undertook certain tasks. It was agreed that Mr. Gorbachev would step up his efforts to convince America and the allies to extend the deadline to give Iraq the chance to accept the conditions. It was also agreed that Iran would contact the Iraqis and ask them to start withdrawing. Unfortunately, it was proved that America and the allies pursue additional aims.

Referring to the efforts made by our country's foreign minister and the special committee of the Nonaligned movement to prevent the spread of the war and further damage, he said we shall go on trying to prevent these regrettable incidents, which have caused the destruction of huge human and economic resources in the region. We ask Mr. Kurt Waldheim, because of his experience in such matters at the UN, to start a fresh initiative, considering Austria's effective role in the Security Council and future chairmanship of that council.

Mock Departs 24 Feb

NC2502075691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] The Austrian Foreign Minister who came to our country at the head of a delegation, left Tehran this morning. He was seen off by Mr. Va'ezi, the deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs. Prior to his departure he spoke to our correspondent about the outcome of his visit. He said that he had held talks with Iranian officials on political, economic, scientific and cultural issues. Regarding the broadening of economic ties between the two countries he said: Austrian industrialists in the private sector are extremely eager to participate in Iran's reconstruction. The Austrian Foreign Minister also stressed the expansion of scientific and cultural ties between the two countries.

Beijing Envoy Calls for Allied 'Flexibility'

LD2302170191 Tehran IRNA in English 1633 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 23, IRNA—Chinese envoy Yang Fuchang told Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati here Saturday that Beijing favours Iraq's unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait and also that of foreign forces from the Persian Gulf.

Yang said "now that Iraq has accepted Resolution 660 other parties should show flexibility in order to solve the crisis peacefully," he said. He also announced his country's readiness for serious cooperation with the Islamic Republic to terminate the crisis.

On Tehran-Beijing ties, he said Chinese leaders attached "great importance" to the expansion of cooperation with the Islamic republic.

Velayati in response thanked the Bejing Government for supporting Iran's peace efforts and wished for a peaceful settlement of the Persian Gulf war. He said both countries shared the view that Iraqi troops should withdraw from Kuwait and foreign forces from the Persian Gulf. The Iranian foreign minister expressed hope that mutual relations between the two countries would further expand in the future.

Calls For End to Gulf War

LD2302122691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Mr. Yang Fuchang, Chinese deputy foreign minister and special presidential envoy, in the first round of his talks with Iran's deputy foreign minister about solving the Persian Gulf crisis, said: Since Iraq has accepted the Soviet peace plan, we hope that the government of that country takes speedy action to evacuate its forces from Kuwait.

According to a Central News Unit report, he added: We believe the security of the Persian Gulf region must be

maintained by the regional countries and that the independence and territorial integrity of the [regional] countries, including Iraq, must be preserved.

While outlining the stance of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the latest developments in the region, Iranian deputy foreign minister said: The opportunity that has arisen following Iran's efforts and the Soviet peace plan to end this unequal war is, in fact, the last chance to prevent further massacre and destruction. If the multinational forces do not accept Iraq's unconditional withdrawal, [offer] they will have in effect stepped beyond the Security Council authorization.

Finally, he said: The maintenance of the region without Iran's active participation would not be practical and possible.

President Meets PRC Special Envoy

LD2302121391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani this morning received Mr. Yang Fuchang, the special envoy of the Chinese president, who was bearing a message from the Chinese president to our country's president.

During the meeting, the special envoy of the Chinese president conveyed the greetings of the PRC president and prime minister and presented the message from PRC President Yang Shangkun. Yang Fuchang said: Chinese leaders still fondly remember your excellency's 1985 visit. We attach a great deal of importance to the expansion and deepening of the existing ties between our countries.

Referring to the current crisis in the Persian Gulf and expressing concern about the consequences of the crisis for the peoples of the region, he said: Considering the many common factors in the stances of Iran and China on the crisis regarding Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait and the departure of foreign forces from the region, China strongly supports your country's efforts to peacefully resolve the current war. We are prepared to cooperate with your country, which enjoys a very important status in the region, to prevent a further spread of this devastating war. We believe that, after the war, the security of the region should be maintained with the participation of the regional countries.

Finally, referring to the traditional and long-standing ties between Iran and China, he expressed the hope that in the future the ties between the two countries in political, cultural, economic, and commercial fields will be further expanded.

While expressing his gratitude for the kind message of the PRC president, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: China's wish for an end to the current crisis in the region, as a country which also has active participation in the UN Security Council, is admirable and praiseworthy.

Referring to Iraq's positive response to the call for the evacuation of Kuwait and its rejection by the United States, the Iranian president said: The Iraqis have reacted properly to the efforts of Iran and the USSR. However, it seems that the United States is pursuing an aim beyond Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait; otherwise, the allied countries should show goodwill and prevent the spread and proliferation of war in the region. He stressed: We hope that, in the short time that remains, the Chinese Government and other interested countries will make greater efforts to stop the war.

Finally, referring to the extremely favorable grounds for cooperation between Iran and China, he welcomed the expansion of mutual ties in all fields. He asked the special envoy of the Chinese president to convey his reciprocal greetings to the Chinese president and prime minister.

Envoy Departs 24 Feb

LD2402224691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Mr. Yang Fuchang, deputy foreign minister and special envoy of the president of the PRC, who was on a visit to Iran, left Tehran Sunday night. He was seen off by Mr. Borujerdi, deputy foreign minister for Asia and Oceania.

During the trip, Mr. Yang Fuchang met and conferred with the president of our country and the ministers for foreign affairs and economic affairs and finance. Before leaving Tehran, in an interview with our reporter he said: In the talks we had with Iranian officials, the critical situation in the Persian Gulf and the expansion of China's relations with Iran were reviewed and examined and both countries emphasized that they will continue their efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Persian Gulf crisis.

Ayatollah Jannati on U.S. Aims in Gulf

LD2202192891 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1427 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Friday prayers sermon by Ayatollah Jannati, head of the Islamic Propagation Organization, member of the Guardians Council and member of the Assembly of Experts, in Qom on 22 February—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] The point worth mentioning is that you should pay attention to the time when His Holiness Sajjad [the fourth Shi'ite imam] performed the prayers during the 'Ummayyad rule, when one of the filthiest governments in the entire history of Islam ruled over Muslim society and over the children of the Koran. These were the people who were hostile to the household of the Prophet, who killed the oppressed, and who created the Karbala tragedy.

But issues should be differentiated. One issue is the issue of internal affairs. Yes, currently, within the Islamic region, a government is behaving aggressively toward the

followers of the Prophet, it is confronting Islam, it is at war with the best and the worthiest children of Islam and destroying them all. That is one issue, but not the complete issue.

At the same time some [people] are at the border, some are at the front fighting the enemy, and they are confronted by polytheists, Jews, Christians, and infidels. At any rate, one front, under the banner of Islam, currently is at war with infidelity. We cannot ignore that and say that now that they are involved we should refrain from saying a single prayer and we should wait and see what our view is. The view is that those two issues should be separated. We should condemn these 'Umayyed, and as much as we can we shall try to annihilate their government and we will defend Islam which they are [trying to] annihilate. That is one issue.

Another issue is that we have a state which is Islamic. This Islamic state has borders; this Islamic state has enemies. All of the enemy's efforts are concentrated on trying to smash this Islam, to penetrate these borders, and to come and occupy the Islamic territory as much as they can, to break the present power which is an Islamic power, and once again to establish the rule of idolatry and infidelity. That is another issue. What should be done in this case? We should help as much as we can to stop the enemy overcoming the Islamic society and to insure that Muslims are not defeated by their enemies. Those two issues should be separated and those prayers are teaching us about the particular culture so that we should be careful not to mix the issues. That issue needs a lot of precise attention which I now leave. [passage omitted]

And now about the war. As you have heard today, Iraq has announced that it is ready to accept the Soviet plan to unconditionally withdraw from Kuwait. The war in the Persian Gulf entered a new stage today and a new page was added to the history of this war.

The question is: What are the Americans going to do? In any case, the United States is an enemy who has come to the region and is engaged in what it has wanted to do for many years and but could not. I foresee that they will not let go so easily and, as far as they can and world public opinion permits and they are not forced to leave they will want to stay in the region, to propagate corruption and to weaken local governments and powers. That is their aim.

I know that their enmity will not cease with Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait, and so on. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was an excuse for their military presence, for them to directly interfere in the region, and to indirectly oversee the events here. And they have gotten their excuse. But what brings us joy is that I am sure that these clashes will not benefit the United States. The Americans have propagated, and are propagating, corruption in the world. Today there is no plague for mankind in the whole world like the United States. One day mankind will see salvation, the cry of 'Death to America' will rise from churches and the loudspeakers of international organizations. [crowd chants: Death to America]

The same threat from the 'Umayyad clan to Islam in the first century of Islam, which was removed with the martyrdom of His Holiness Aba 'Abdallah, peace be upon him, faces mankind and Islam today from the United States. That is, conditions today are such that people everywhere cannot taste freedom.

Certain people claim to be free and to have democracy and so on, in Europe for example. Could anyone in any European country speak about the war news as it really is? Could any radio, TV, news agency, newspaper, or publication report what is really happening in Iraq now and all the crimes that they are committing? None of them can! There is strict control and the war news is broadcast to the world through only one channel. What misery is this that mankind has to tolerate, for one person to say: Everybody should say what I say and what I want them to say? What claims are these that they are making about diplomacy and other demagogic words. Humanity is really being covered in dirt by the immorality they are propagating. There is no sign of humanity left. [passage omitted]

When the United States, as a power, commits the worst crimes, what is there to stop smaller powers from behaving as they wish? They must only be careful not to offend that big power, otherwise they are free to do what they like and bring whatever calamity they want on to other people. [passage omitted]

Yazdi Stresses Gulf Peace Efforts Continue

LD2402210891 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The consultative session of the judicial officials of the country convened today and was chaired by Yazdi, chief of the judicial branch. At this meeting, the chief of the judicial branch, referring to the new circumstances under which the Persian Gulf crisis finds itself, said: The continuation of the presence of the multinational forces in the region is not in the interest of any of the countries of the region, and if the views of the Islamic Republic of Iran are overlooked, no security project will succeed in safeguarding the security of the region. Referring to the point that a peaceful end to the current war depends on the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait and of the foreign forces from the Persian Gulf, he said: Under present circumstances, the grounds for conducting political negotiations for a peaceful solution to the Persian Gulf crisis remain and efforts in this regard will continue. The chief of the judicial branch considered that the elimination of the present impasse in the Persian Gulf crisis would be brought about if the Iraqi president were to pay more attention to the region's interests and if the multinational forces were to observe the Security Council resolutions.

Ahmad Khomeyni Assails Allied Ground Attack

LD2402122391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Excerpts] The Friday imam of Newshawr, families of martyrs, officials and workers of the state hygiene organization, officials of judicial bureaus of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, a number of students, and various strata of the public met Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni in Jamaran this morning. [passage omitted]

Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni described the use of unauthorized and inhuman weapons by the multinational forces against the Muslim people of Iraq as a violation of international law and rules. He declared: The massacre and genocide committed by the Western allied forces, followed by their land offensive in the early hours of this morning, crown the savage crimes of arrogance. Military analysts believe that Bush's 24-hour ultimatum to the Iraqi forces to evacuate the occupied areas was impossible. This was after those forces had set a deadline of six months for their evacuation.

From the outset of the occupation of Kuwait, the Americans nurtured thoughts of a military invasion and were never concerned about the Persian Gulf. At the end of their military operations they behaved in such a way as to strengthen their military presence and maintain their reign over the entire Persian Gulf region.

Iran's fundamental and firm policy towards America and Iraq shows the world that Islamic Iran is the main key to conflicts in the region and future peace in the Persian Gulf.

Hashemian Reportedly Calls War 'Against Islam'

NC2402102991 Paris AFP in English 0951 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, Feb 24 (AFP) - The deputy speaker of the Iranian parliament Sunday described the U.S.-led ground offensive to evict Iraqi troops from Kuwait as a "war against Islam" and said Muslims would seek revenge.

State-run Tehran Radio gave a brief mention of the start of the operations in its early morning broadcast in the absence of any official comment from the government of President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

But Majles (parliament) Deputy Speaker Mohammad Hashemian, a leader of hardliners in the government, addressed the legislative body and said: "America and Britain, this old hyena, have entered war against Islam."

"The Muslim people will seek revenge," he warned.

Another hardline MP [member of parliament], Abolhasan Ha'erizadeh urged vigilance in Tehran, saying that Iran "will not be spared in this massive American offensive".

Iran, which Saturday accused the U.S.-led coalition of outstepping its U.N. mandate to end Iraq's nearly seven-month occupation of Kuwait, has declared its neutrality in the conflict from the start.

The official IRNA news agency meanwhile reported that thick black smoke blanketed most of the northern sector of the Persian Gulf on Sunday, saying the clouds had been caused by allied bombardments of "Kuwait and economic and oil installations in Iraq".

IRNA said the clouds were first seen over the northern Gulf island of Khark and were moving inland and spreading to other areas in southern Iran.

The agency also reported heavy allied air and missile attacks overnight and early Saturday of southern Iraqi cities and said that the sound of explosions could be heard "every ten minutes" in the southern Iranian towns of Abadan and Khorramshahr.

Majles Speaker Departs for Pakistan, North Korea

LD2302092591 Tehran IRNA in English 0737 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 23 IRNA—Majles speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi left here for Islamabad Saturday morning [23 February] heading a ranking political, economic, and military delegation.

The Majles speaker is to visit Pakistan and Democratic People's Republic of Korea at the invitation of his Pakistani and North Korean counterparts, Gowhar Ayub and Yang Hyung-sop, respectively.

He was seen off at the airport by first vice-president Hasan Habibi and other ranking officials.

In an interview before departure he said that he is to discuss the latest developments and the security of the Persian Gulf as well as presence of alien forces in the region with the officials of the two countries.

UN Envoy Confident of Peace Returning to Gulf

LD2302152491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Kamal Kharrazi, the Islamic Republic of Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, expressed confidence about finding a positive solution to the Persian Gulf crisis. He said: We are currently very close to a political solution.

Stressing a continuation of efforts in that regard, he said: The Islamic Republic of Iran, while believing that Iraq should leave Kuwait unconditionally, also believes that as long as foreign forces have not left the region, security will not return to the region.

Leaders Say Allied Stance 'Oversteps' UN Decrees

LD2302162491 Tehran IRNA in English 1602 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 23, IRNA—Iran's Supreme National Security Council on Saturday termed Iraq's preparedness to fully withdraw from Kuwait as "positive and noteworthy".

The council underlined the need for continuation of peace efforts in view of the fact that "the recent stance adopted by the multinational forces oversteps the (U.N.) Security Council resolutions and serves to escalate military clashes."

The session, presided over by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, called for persual of grounds that might help end the hostilities.

All council members as well as political advisors and high ranking military commanders were present at the session.

Tehran Reports Start of Ground Operations

NC2402051791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Ground operations by the multinational forces, led by America against Iraq and the Iraqi forces in Kuwait, began in the early hours of this morning. The Central News Unit reports from London that at 0630 today [0300 GMT] U.S. President Bush announced in a two-minute radio and television message that the war has entered its final phase. He also spoke about possible heavy casualties among U.S. forces, and called on the American people to pray.

The Pentagon has also announced that the details of the operation and the objectives of the multinational forces will not be published until further notice. However, on the basis of reports that have been received, the operations began at 0330 today [0100 GMT].

The multinational forces entered Kuwait from the south and infiltrated Iraqi territory from Saudi borders as well. The troops are possibly moving toward southwest Basra in order to cut off the Iraqi forces' supply routes and communications links with Baghdad in Kuwait. No further details have been received so far.

Chairmanship of Chemical Disarmament Group Noted

LD2302193191 Tehran IRNA in English 1808 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 23, IRNA—Iran has been elected as chairman of the security group of the special committee for chemicals at the disarmament conference for 1991. The special committee has been assigned the task to compile a report for banning production, expansion, stockpiling and application of chemical weapons and present it to the disarmament conference in Geneva. Of the three groups of the committee, Iran will chair the security group, Poland the monitoring group and Italy the legal and organizational group. The task of the security group is to urge countries possessing chemical weapons to join the convention, convince them to destroy their chemical arsenals and producing factories and guarantee their security during the process of destruction of chemical arms. The group should also study and make up for the shortcomings of international conventions against use of chemical arms particularly the 1925 Geneva protocol, in which some countries have the right for chemical retaliation. The last topic is especially important, in view of Washington's announcement that in case of an Iraqi chemical attack against the invading forces its would retaliate in kind.

Refugees From Iraq Report Situation 'Critical'

LD2202183391 Tehran IRNA in English 1637 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Bakhtaran, Feb. 22, IRNA—Another group of 16 Iranians residing in Iraq arrived here through Khosravi border checkpoint Thursday [21 February].

A number of these persons interviewed by IRNA described the situation in Iraq as very critical and the morale of the people low.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Javad Shirazi who along with his family members is among the refugees, said the people in Iraq were suffering from shortage of water and electricity as well as telecommunications defects.

Shirazi, a resident of al-Najaf for 25 years, said despite the bombing of the holy city theological courses were still being held. He said at the outset of the war, the people took refuge in holy cities in Iraq, including al-Najaf but after these cities were also bombed by the allied aircraft, the people gradually returned to their own cities and towns.

'Abdol-Majid Khajeh Najafi who owns a dairy in al-Najaf, said the city was unsafe at the time being and the people were suffereing from shortage of foodstuffs, fuel and medicines.

He said the Iraqi people thought that Iran because of its eight year old war with Iraq would join the anti-Iraq front but after realising that Tehran had adopted a neutral stance and was even sending them medicine and food, they felt ashamed before Iranian residents in Iraq.

Refugees Total More Than 9,000

LD2202225291 Tehran IRNA in English 1225 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Bakhtaran, Western Iran, Feb. 22, IRNA—Another group of 70 foreign nationals arrived in Iran through Khosravi border checkpoint on Thursday.

This brings to 9,322 the number of foreigners coming to this side of the border from inside Iraq since the outbreak of the Persian Gulf war on January 17.

Of this number 3,358 have already departed for their own countries. The last batch of them was a group of 430 Sudanese who were flown home Thursday night.

The others were from Bangladesh, India, Somalia, Yemen, Ethiopia, Algeria, the Philippines, Tunisia, and Vietnam who left for their respective countries in coordination with their embassies in Tehran.

Editorial Urges Diplomatic Solution to War

NC2302172391 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 18 Feb 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Negotiations Must Be Given Chance to Halt War"]

[Excerpts] Iraq's conditional acceptance on Friday of the UN Security Council Resolution 660 calling for a total withdrawal from Kuwait of its troops has caused some confusion among the international community and yet it has given some cause for hope that the Persian Gulf war in which the U.S.-led multinational forces are pitted against Iraq can yet be settled through negotiations. It is unclear still whether ancillary proposals outlined by the Revolutionary Command Council [as published] of Iraq to its offer to make the withdrawal are indeed conditions, or "issues" as an Iraqi diplomat put it yesterday. [passage omitted]

It is a promising sign though that Iraq has opted to speak outright of its willingness to pull out of Kuwait and the world community, and the U.S. and its allies in particular, will do well to press this opportunity to make peace instead of insisting on continuing the war. Wars usually start when negotiations fail, but it does not follow as an axiom that once started all chances for stopping are lost and cannot be through negotiations. [sentence as published] Hence this is a grand chance not to be missed.

To bring the hostilities to halt at this stage it must be remembered can save the lives of thousands of innocent civilians who are being subjected to indiscriminate bombings and the lives of thousands of soldiers in a ground battle, let alone the colossal environmental damage that will be caused. It is not simply a question of which side is the stronger but what the cost will be in the end to all involved. All those reacting negatively to a peaceful end to this conflict are not thinking right and should consider again. When and if a ground battle starts, as it is threatening now, it may be too late.

Those keen to pursue the war are perhaps those who are of the opinion that Iraq allowed to survive intact, even at this stage, may be a dangerous factor in the region with its still strong military potential and strategic position in the region. This kind of thinking is completely fallacious and ignores the fact that there can never be any peace in this region until and unless the regional states themselves come around to solving their own problems.

What is needed now then [as published] is for the United Nations to exercise fully its authority to stop the killings of civilians in the war, get the combatants to the negotiating table and pave the way for a new regional order to be established as an insurance against the outbreaks of any further conflicts which will require the gratuitous intervention of foreign forces not directly interested in the welfare of the region or its peoples but only in their own.

Editorial Criticizes U.S., UK 'Inflexible Stand'

NC2302174791 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 17 Feb 91 p 2

[Editorial: Tehran, Moscow Peace Moves Crucial To Avert Bloody War"]

[Text] The West's reaction vis-a-vis Friday's proposal by the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council [as published] has been unbearably harsh. Yet the most inflexible stand has been adopted by the U.S. president George Bush and Britain's Prime Minister John Major.

Meanwhile, the French President Francois Mitterrand has also announced that the said proposal by Iraqi officials on a ceasefire, could not be accepted since it could not meet the demands stipulated in the UN Security Council Resolution 660. The Friday proposal by Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council, although in President Mitterrand's view cannot meet demands of the UN Security Council, embody certain positive points which could pave the ground and set an axis for further talks on the achievement of peace.

Iraq's acceptance of Security Council Resolution 660 and withdrawal from Kuwait is a positive step which should be underlined as a starting point. However, President Mitterrand's reasoning that only Iraq has violated the Security Council's resolutions is not acceptable and he should bear in mind that his allies in the Persian Gulf war, contrary to the principles of the United Nations targeted many residential and non-military quarters in Iraq during the past month. This measure in itself is a blatant infringement of all international laws and regulations. In fact, the raison d'etre of the United Nations in the aftermath of the World War II is the establishment of peace and stability all over the world and not encouraging the states to continue destruction and bloodshed. Based on this interpretation about the reasons behind the creation of the United Nations, Iran since the very beginning of the bloody battle in the Persian Gulf, has employed all its potentials to put a speedy end to the conflict.

Political observers in the region attach great importance to the recent trips of Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati to Moscow, Iraq's Sa'dun Hammadi's visit to Tehran, dispatch of a ranking Iranian delegation to Baghdad, and the imminent visit of Iraq's Tariq 'Aziz to Moscow. An outcome of these rounds of visits and talks would possibly be the only chance for preventing a ground battle, a battle which in the opinion of military experts, would leave behind a heavy human casualty. [sentence as published]

Editorial on Linkage of Kuwait-Palestine Issues

NC2302175591 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 17 Feb 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Linkage in Persian Gulf Crisis"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] The Iraqi proposal in exchange for compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 660 passed on August 2, 1990 is not new. During the Geneva talks held less than a week before a United Nations deadline authorizing the use of force against Iraq, the Palestinian issue as well as Syria's dominant role in Lebanon were high in the Tariq 'Aziz-James Baker agenda. Saddam Husayn said soon after the Kuwaiti invasion that he would withdraw his troops if the Israelis did the same from the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

The fact is, the United States and the United Nations cannot reject the invasion of Kuwaiti land without rejecting the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands. If the West agrees that the United Nations' sanctions and force are necessary in Kuwait, they must also concur they are equally applicable to the case of the Palestinians. Israel has no right to claim Palestinian land just as Iraq has no right to claim Kuwaiti land.

Since the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, Israel has been edgy about the inclusion of its 23-year old occupation of the West Bank and Gaza strip in the Persian Gulf peace equation. An AP dispatch last month raised the possibility of a secret deal to have Saddam leave Kuwait in exchange for, among other things an international peace conference on the Middle East. Israel has long opposed an international peace confab [as published] fearing that Arabs and Third World countries could draw concessions from the Zionist government, which could mean giving up the occupied lands. [passage omitted]

A major key to world peace and progress is a complete and comprehensive settlement of all outstanding problems in the Middle East. To allow Israel to continue occupying the Palestinian territories while allied forces are killing innocent Iraqi civilians to punish Saddam for his annexing Kuwait would only serve to disgrace the United Nations.

Twenty-five percent of the world's population is Muslim and it is the Palestinian issue that continues to block the way towards peace in the Middle East. Israel has no right to expand its territory as the expense of others just as Iraq does not. The United Nations must force Israel to accept compromise; Iraqi troops must leave Kuwait in order to guarantee regional peace.

Soviet Peace Plan May Cause Rift in Alliance

LD2202210991 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1545 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] One of the important events in the Persian Gulf war which has succeeded in the sudden disarrangement of a multitude of equations and predictions on the war, was Iraq's acceptance of UN Resolution 660 and withdrawal from Kuwait. The objective behind the acceptance of that resolution was the possibility of achieving a cease-fire, protracting the ground war, prolonging the trend of the crisis, and placing the United States in a quandary. With the adoption of that decision Iraq will not only alter its international image, but will also establish closer ties with the Soviet Union, hence creating a rift in the ranks of the U.S. allies. Moreover, by accepting that resolution, and the withdrawal from Kuwait, Iraq has secured the right to deploy its unconventional weapons in case of a ground attack.

In the wake of the talks between the Soviet special envoy Primakov and the Iraqi [Revolution] Command Council, followed by Tariq 'Aziz's visit to Moscow, Mr. Gorbachev proposed a peace plan which received various reactions. The United States and Britain, whose presence in the region is aimed at the annihilation of Iraq and the overthrow of its regime, have not welcomed the new diplomatic initiative by Iraq and the Soviet Union, describing it as devoid of any new points. [passage omitted] While the stances adopted by the U.S. State Department and the White House are indicative of the existence of discord among them, George Bush also, having rejected the Soviet plan, emphasized that the plan was highly insufficient in terms of what is required to end the Persian Gulf war, for which reason there will be no negotiations since the aims have been outlined and there will be no concessions.

The above stances were adopted amid Western concern over the potential heavy casualties and damages sustained by a ground battle. Nevertheless, the U.S. and British Governments, having failed to attain a rapid and easy victory by their extensive and destructive air raids, see themselves with no choice other than embarking on a ground battle. That is because the passage of time can work against the allies in political and military terms, and could create a rift between them.

Moreover, in view of the economic situation in the United States and the extortionate war expenditure, as well as the wave of domestic and international opposition, the United States and its allies cannot afford to lose more time.

The Soviet Union which has played second fiddle ever since the outset of the crisis, has once again placed itself in the center of political activities. Five weeks into the war and the round-the-clock raids leading to the savage massacre of the Iraqi people, have shown that U.S. actions were incompatible with the UN resolution. Thus, it appears that in the past few days, the Soviet Government, by making a gradual turn, has attempted to abandon its passive role and try to bring Iraq closer to the UN conditions by the same extent that the U.S. is departing from them. The Kremlin has realized that the escalation of the war and victory by the West could

threaten its national interests, spelling unpleasant consequences for that country. The occupation of Iraq, the continuation of the military presence of the United States and its allies in the Persian Gulf region, the creation of a security pact without Moscow nor the absorption and integration of its traditional ally, namely Syria, into that pact, will render the Soviet Union's southern borders more insecure.

On the other hand U.S. control over the region's oil wells has led to predictions of a slump in oil prices. This issue will not only be fatal to the economy of oil-producing countries, but will also confront the Soviet Union with greater economic problems as an oil exporter. From a political viewpoint, in the event of an Iraqi defeat, the Soviet Union will not only lose its influence in the entire region, but it will also lose its special status in the world. Therefore, by ending the war and establishing peace, Moscow attempts to restore its tarnished image, and secure itself an important role in resolving Middle East problems and its future, by gaining the support of Arab countries, something which is not viewed favorably by the United States.

Meanwhile, the reactions of the European Community is worth noting. With the exception of the British Government, that community has ever since the start [of the war] favored a diplomatic solution to the crisis, since the differences in the interests and the viewpoints of the United States and Europe have been a constant cause of a rift between them. Italy's decision to refrain from taking part in air attacks and France's reactive role in those attacks, are indicative of this reality. [passage omitted]

In conclusion, the discord and differences over the Persian Gulf crisis could assume a new shape in the future. Hence, European support for the Soviet peace plan will pose problems and cause political isolation for the United States in its unilateral ground attack against Iraqi forces.

Soviet Effort To Maintain Regional Power Viewed

LD2402182191 Tehran IRNA in English 1810 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 24, IRNA—The Persian Daily KAYHAN said in commentary Sunday that the Soviets wish to see an unimpaired and undivided Iraq as a component of their power base in the region.

The commentary said current developments in the Soviet Union indicate a slow but well-calculated return to previous political mechanisms.

"An inclination to a new form of centralism, the purging of certain liberals, the effective application of force for solving the current crisis in the Baltics, the slow progress of economic reform towards market economy, and a belated effort for saving Iraq as one of the biggest (Soviet) bases in the Middle East, evidence that reality." it added.

"Despite the previous position of the Soviets," said the daily, "during the office of (ex-Foreign Minister) Eduard Shevardnadze which was harmonious with the West the Soviets tried only a half-successful diplomatic maneuver for saving Iraq for themselves and preventing its being fully devoured by the West and the Americans, but their late action and their total loss of political deterrents was somehow responsible for the failure of the Soviets in that respect."

The commentary concluded by saying that the current efforts of Moscow for saving Iraq, and its emphasis on the territorial integrity of that country is a token of Moscow's return to its previous position for maintaining its power sources in the region.

Radio Warns Against U.S. 'Mischief' as War Ends

LD2302102391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0740 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. With greetings to the defenders of Islam are the great and self-denying Iranian nation, we begin today's program.

Although Iraq has declared its readiness to accept [UN Security Council] Resolution 660 and to depart from Kuwait, the United States and its allies are rejecting the Iraqi acceptance with intent to fan the flames of war. As such, they cause the slaughter of innocent people and destruction of the region. [passage omitted]

In other developments, a number of other countries have embarked on expanded efforts to bring the war to an end and establish a cease-fire. Meanwhile, because of its logical and principled handling of the recent crisis, the Islamic Republic of Iran is seen as the most important decisionmaking center regarding the recent crisis. Today Tehran is a witness to diplomatic traffic aimed at putting an end to a war that has already seen much bloodshed and wasted a great deal of the resources of the region.

The Soviet Union has also made some efforts in this crisis to bring the war to an end and establish a cease-fire. Tehran and Moscow have been turned into the decisionmaking centers for bringing the crisis to an end. That development steadily strengthens the hope that in the near future we will witness the end of the conflict together with the end of the massive slaughter and destruction.

It is possible, however,that in the last moments before the war ends, the United States may resort to some mischief with the aim of showing that it has achieved a decisive victory in the war. It did the same during World War II when, despite Japan's declaration of unconditional surrender, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were made targets of American nuclear bombs. Such an event is likely in this recent war as well. Therefore, one must be fully on guard against possible moves by America to exploit the situation. [passage omitted]

U.S. Ultimatum Exhibits 'Warmongering Policy'

LD2302132591 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1108 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Greetings dear listeners.

The one-week ultimatum served by the United States on Iraq, calling on her to evacuate Kuwait unconditionally, which goes into effect at 2030 tonight, seriously endangers the political efforts by the soviet Union to solve the Persian Gulf crisis peacefully.

U.S. President George Bush yesterday rejected any kind of ceasefire with Iraq and then served notice on that country to withdraw from Kuwait within one week. That ultimatum was tabled at a time when the Soviet Union, mindful of Washington's objections to Gorbachev's initial plan, presented an adjusted plan to Iraq; and now she is waiting for the reply of Saddam Husayn, the Iraqi president.

The question now is: Now that the Soviet Union is trying to cater to U.S. objectives and as such to prevent the groundwar and also protect the people and the ruling system in Iraq from further damage, why has the United States confronted these political efforts with the danger of defeat by adopting more extremist stances?

After one month since the outbreak of multinational war against Iraq, it is now revealed that the United States is following objectives beyond the liberation of Kuwait; she hopes, through extending her influence in the region, to implement her own security, economic, and political projects in the region. Adoption of such policies by the rulers of the United States has been faced with opposition from the Soviet Union, the European powers—except England—and most of the countries of the region, as the United States' declared objectives were exposed, the Soviet Union, which had abandoned her rivalries stemming from the policies of the Cold War era and who had adopted a policy of cooperation with the United States in the international fora since the initial days of the Persian Gulf crisis, had now to concentrate her efforts to bar the U.S. expansionist and militaristic policies in the region, which increase the bloodshed in the area.

Iraq—by agreeing to evacuate the bloodshed in the area and accepting the framework of the Soviet plan while Moscow's efforts continue to present a plan in which U.S. and Iraqi views are met—has presently placed the United States in a political corner. The United States, which is after realization of her hidden objectives, is being seen by Iraq as being responsible for the continuation of war and bloodshed.

Political analysts believe that the recent U.S. ultimatum, which includes unrealistic conditions, is an indication of the continuation of Washington's warmongering policy. In other words, Bush knows beforehand that Iraq will oppose those conditions. By taking that measure, however, he absolves himself from the responsibility of continuation of war, introducing Saddam Husayn as the real culprit.

From the viewpoint of the said analysts, the United States' other objective in giving the one-week ultimatum is that if Iraq accepts the U.S. ultimatum and withdraws from Kuwait, then the United States, by using the Security Council resolutions, will follow her objectives through that end. In other words, U.S. opposition to the Soviet plan—a plan which calls for the cancellation of Security Council resolutions against Iraq—is motivated by the fact that Washington hopes, through manipulation of the resolution on payment of reparation, to place pressure on the Iraqi rulers and thus to influence the political future of that country; and do so in a way in which the survival of the present Iraqi regime may not be possible.

That may be regarded as a complete victory for the United States in the current oil war. However, since it is in contradiction with the interests of many major European countries, as well as the Soviet Union and the countries of the region, it may lead to a serious crack in the present coalition; it may bring about severe rivalries among the world powers. That is so because Washington today is not simply following her declared objective of liberating Kuwait. Rather, she is after the realization of her hidden objectives and principally the establishment of her unbridled control over the oil-rich and wealthy Persian Gulf region.

Commentary Calls U.S. 'Real Warmonger' in Region

LD2402143791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1113 GMT 24 Feb 91

["Commencement of the Ground War"—station commentary]

[Text] Finally, the ground war has begun. After five weeks of aerial bombardment of Iraq, and Baghdad's response with missile attacks, this morning the ground offensive by the U.S.-led international coalition began with a march toward Kuwaiti territory and the violation of Iraqi territory.

The Persian Gulf crisis, which began with the Iraqi occupation of Kuwaiti territory, was a mistake. The rejection of political plans to end the war and avert a ground assault was another, more deadly, mistake.

Some praiseworthy efforts were made by countries not involved in the international anti-Iraqi coalition, but, unfortunately, all these efforts were frustrated by the obstinacy of one side or another.

The plan put forward by our country's president, which according to many world analysts could provide an exit from a destructive and all-out ground war, did not bring

an immediate and clear response from the Iraqi Government. The Soviet peace plan confronted the narrow-mindedness of the U.S. By its rejection, America announced, and in fact imposed, some conditions for the Iraqi withdrawal. Conditions which from the beginning were obviously not acceptable to Baghdad.

From the time the Iraqi Government issued a statement accepting Security Council Resolution 660, followed by two Soviet peace plans based on it, some political experts began to believe that Iraq does not want to accept total defeat, and that America, through its narrow-mindedness, showed that it does not intend to share victory with any other party, such as the Soviets.

Of course, it should not be forgotten that despite all the available information, the decisive determination of the winning or the defeated side is not possible, because at any moment unexpected issues may prevail.

Apart from that, success in a ground or air assault, or in a military one in general, may not mean a victory in war, and particularly in the political aspect of it. Complete victory in war means achieving victory in ground operations and absorbing all regional consequences in the post-war stage. But America is already recognized as the real warmonger by the people of the region.

The Soviet Union tried last night, in a last-minute bid, to combine its plan with the U.S. conditions in order to prepare the ground for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. But the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations did not accept that proposal, and the start of the ground war. A few hours before the Security Council consultative session dashed all hopes.

From the beginning of the crisis, and particularly since military operations began on 17 January, the United States acted in a way that reflects the fact that it, with its strategic ally Israel, will not be content with anything short of the destruction of Iraqi military capability and that country's clear and definite defeat.

The Iraqi Government statement accepting Security Council Resolution 660, followed by the Soviet Union's peace plan, isolated the U.S. Government that had begun its threat of a ground war a few days earlier. Therefore, America will be recognized as the side that started any war which was going to break out, since it did not agree with the peace plans. Washington immediately announced some conditions which it was almost sure Baghdad would not accept. Therefore, it would be Iraq that rejected the latest peace plan put forward by America.

But this political juggling act did not work very well. No person, country or government in the region doubts that America practically eliminated conditions for reaching an agreement.

U.S. efforts to begin an immediate ground assault were implemented in order to stop the collapse of the international coalition. The coalition was cracking up following recent peace plans.

The ground war is going to be a bloody war, with a great deal of damage and many casualties. It is an unprecedented tragedy for the people of the region and the world. Who will be the winner or the loser? Before answering that question, we can say that the people of the region must pay, for a long time, for the illogical attitudes of the men who hold places within the governments in the world and in the region.

Pakistan

Iran's Karrubi, Delegation Arrive in Islamabad

BK2302115591 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] The speaker of the Iranian Majles, Hojjat-ol Eslam Mehdi Karrubi, arrived in Islamabad this afternoon on a four-day visit to Pakistan as the head of a [word indistinct] member parliamentary delegation. He was received at the airport among others by the speaker of the National Assembly, Mr. Gauhar Ayub Khan.

Karrubi Urges Concerted Gulf Efforts

BK2302163191 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Hojjat-ol Eslam Mehdi Karrubi, speaker of the Iranian parliament, has called upon the Islamic countries to make concerted efforts to resolve the Gulf crisis. Addressing a civic reception in Islamabad this afternoon, he said that the Islamic countries should make special efforts to deal with the (?effects) of the current war in the Gulf. He said that Iran has asked India at the official level on several occasions to restore the rights of Muslims in occupied Kashmir. He prayed for a quick solution of the Kashmir, Palestine and Lebanon problems.

On his current visit to Pakistan, the Iranian speaker said that it is aimed at holding talks on the issues facing the Islamic world and expressed the hope that the visit will help promote cooperation between the two countries on various sectors.

Earlier, Haji Nawaz Khokhar, the deputy speaker of the National Assembly, expressed the confidence that Karrubi's current visit will pave the way for further cooperation between the two countries which will help strengthen the international unity of Muslims and stabilize global peace. The reception was attended among others by National Assembly Speaker Gauhar Ayub Khan, federal ministers, elected representative and notables of the city.

Earlier, the Iranian parliament speaker was accorded a warm welcome when he arrived in Islamabad this afternoon on a four-day visit to Pakistan. He is leading a 60-member parliamentary delegation which includes some ministers. The Iranian delegation was received at the airport by National Assembly Speaker Gauhar Ayub Khan and others. A large number of people who gathered outside the airport clapped with joy as they saw the distinguished guest. The Iranian delegation will hold detailed talks with Pakistani leaders on promotion of bilateral ties. It will visit Lahore and Karachi as well.

Karrubi on 'Window to Peace'

LD2302175191 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] According to our correspondent in Pakistan, during the first round of official talks this afternoon in Pakistan's National Assembly between Mr. Karrubi, our country's Majles speaker, and Mr. Gauher Ayub, the leader of Pakistan's National Assembly, the two sides discussed issues relating to the current war in the Persian Gulf. Mr. Karrubi explained the Islamic Republic of Iran's position on the Persian Gulf war and expressed the hope that, in view of the window to peace that has been opened as a result of Iraq's agreement with withdraw from Kuwait, the allied forces, led by the United States, would also undertake the necessary cooperation to peacefully end the Persian Gulf war.

The leader of Pakistan's National Assembly, for his part, stressed the need for Cooperation between the region's countries and said: The Pakistani Government has a strong wish to expand cooperation with Iran, especially in connection with the establishment of an oil pipeline between Iran and Pakistan. We can also buy buses and medicine from Iran, and benefit from the Islamic Republic of Iran's experience in manufacturing military equipment and vehicles.

Mr. Karrubi and his accompanying delegation also took part in a ceremony attended by a large number of leaders of political-religious parties and Ulema and clergymen in the Pakistani town of Islamabad today.

Karrubi Meets Pakistani Counterpart

LD2402093191 Tehran IRNA in English 0726 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Islamabad, Feb. 24, IRNA—The speakers of the Iranian and Pakistani parliaments Saturday condemned continuation of bombardment of residential and civilian areas in Iraq and called on the world of Islam to mobilize their efforts to restore peace in the region. They also termed silence of the international forums vis-a-vis the genocide in Iraq a disgrace on humanity.

The remarks were made in a banquet given by speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly Gowhar Ayub Khan in honour of Iran's visiting Majles Speaker Hojjat al-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi. The two sides expressed the hope that the current visit to Pakistan of the Iranian delegation will create new grounds for Tehran-Islamabad cooperation at international and regional levels and lead to promotion of mutual ties especially in commercial and industrial fields.

Praising the Islamic revolution of Iran, Ayub Khan said that political stability in the region and prosperity of Muslims necessitates a close cooperation between the two countries. He said that in order to promote bilateral ties the two countries must work to execute certain projects including the Iran-Pakistan oil pipeline, joint refineries, joint efforts in military areas, construction of highways, establishment of air link between Quetta and Mashhad, connecting Iran's railways to Pakistan and launching major industrial projects.

Turning to the detrimental impact of the Persian Gulf war on the Islamic world from political, economic and military points of view, he said that Pakistan like Iran did what it could to stop the war.

Ayub Khan stressed that Iran not only as Iraq's neighbour but as a regional power can play a vital role in the region. He also lauded Iran's stand vis-a-vis the Kashmir crisis and called on Islamic and international bodies to end suppression of the Kashmiri people by putting pressure on India.

Referring to expansion of Iran's ties with the neighbouring and Islamic countries, Karrubi said that the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) grouping Iran, Pakistan and Turkey can pave the way for formation of an Islamic common market. He stressed that Iran considered problems of Islamic world, including those of Palestine, Lebanon, Kashmir and Afghanistan, as its own supports their campaign until the achievement of their rights.

Iran's Majles speaker said disunity in the world of Islam, reconciliatory moves of some regional countries and inaction of most Islamic countries in international forums are reasons for Muslims' genocide.

On the ongoing Persian Gulf war, he said withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait and the alien forces led by the U.S. from the region are the only solutions to the crisis. Emphasizing preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity, he said the Islamic Republic of Iran will make efforts to establish peace and end oppression of Muslims.

He described the Palestinian issue as the major problem of the Islamic world and said that the only way to liberate Palestine was to annihilate the Zionist regime.

Turning to Afghanistan crisis, he said that establishment of peace will not be possible without meeting demands of the Afghan Muslim people.

Meanwhile, in a separate meeting with leaders of the Afghan Mujahidin Groups on Sunday, Karrubi reiterated Iran's support for campaign of the Afghan Muslim nation and appealed for further unity among the Mujahidin. Present in the meeting were Maulavi Muhammad

Nabi Muhammadi and Nasrullah Mansur of the Movement for Islamic Revolution, Pir Sayed Ahmad Gailani of National Islamic Front, Burhanuddin Rabbani of Islamic Society and several other representatives and leaders of the Afghan groups.

In another development, Minister of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics Akbar Torkan who is accompanying Karrubi in his visit to Pakistan met with the military advisor to Pakistan's prime minister Saturday and discussed issues of mutual interest.

Karrubi, heading a ranking political, economic and parliamentary delegation, arrived here Saturday on an official 4-day visit.

Delegation Meets Prime Minister

BK2402161691 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The Iranian delegation led by the Iranian Parliament Speaker, Hojjat-ol Eslam Mehdi Karrubi, called on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in Islamabad today. The Gulf situation came under discussion on this occasion and both sides had full accord on their principled stand on the Gulf issue and stressed that continuous efforts are essential for an immediate solution to this conflict. They stressed the need for exchange of views between the Islamic democratic and parliamentary delegations and agreed that both the countries should continue their cooperation based on their Islamic and neighborly relations.

Government Leaders Meet Karrubi

LD2402160291 Tehran IRNA in English 1526 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Islamabad, Feb. 24, IRNA—President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Iranian Majles Speaker Mahdi Karrubi on Sunday discussed the Persian Gulf crisis, the future security arrangement for the region as well as bilateral ties.

Voicing concern over the continued air and ground offensives by the U.S.-led coalition against the oppressed people of Iraq, the two sides called for an immediate end of the war and restoration of peace in the region.

In a separate meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif Sunday, Karrubi announced Iran's readiness to promote ties with Pakistan in political, economic and military fields.

Referring to Iran's purchase of 400,000 tons of rice from Pakistan, the speaker said Tehran was prepared to increase the volume of its trade with Islamabad.

He also pointed to an Iran-Pakistan joint project to set up an oil refinery in Karachi with a capacity of 80,000 barrels per day [BPD] saying Tehran was ready to boost the capacity to 120,000 BPD and offer the surplus production on Iranian markets especially in Sistan-Baluchestan province bordering Pakistan.

Sharif called on Muslim states to have more coordination in the wake of the superpowers' intention to introduce a new security plan in the region after the end of the war in the Persian Gulf.

He expressed hope that Karrubi's visit to Islamabad would help further strengthen mutual ties between the two Muslim neighboring states.

In another meeting Karrubi and the Chairman of Pakistan's Senate Wassim Sajjad Jan stressed that any security arrangement for the region should be made in cooperation with Iran and Pakistan. They also called for expansion of mutual ties.

In another development, Iran's First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, who is part of Karrubi's delegation discussed the latest developments in the Persian Gulf with his Pakistan counterpart Shahryar Khan, on Sunday.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is strongly against violation of the U.N. Security Council resolutions by the Western forces and their relentless massacre of Iraqi people and destruction of their resources," Besharati said.

Shahryar Khan, too, expressed concern about the outbreak of the allied ground offensive against Iraq, saying that to safeguard the security of the region was the task of the regional countries and that the foreign forces should leave the Persian Gulf as soon as the crisis is over.

Besharati also held a separate meeting with Pakistani Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan Sunday.

Karrubi and his entourage including high ranking officials and Majlis deputies arrived here Saturday on a 4-day official visit at the invitation of his Pakistani counterpart Gouhar Ayub Khan.

Karrubi Addresses National Assembly

BK2402163491 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The speaker of the Iranian Majles, Mr. Mehdi Karrubi has said his country believes that responsibility for safeguarding peace and security of the region rests with the countries of the region itself. Addressing the National Assembly this afternoon, he said only those pacts and treaties which originate among Muslim nations of the region are acceptable to us. He referred to the standing serious problems like Palestine, Afghanistan, and massacres of Muslims in occupied Kashmir, which already affect the ummah and said the present Gulf conflict was yet another plot hatched against Muslims. He blamed the Iraqi regime for its miscalculation in starting the present war but strongly opposed the presence of alien forces in the strategic and sensitive Gulf region which he described as unjustified under the circumstances.

The prime minister, in his vote of thanks for the speech of the Iranian Majles speaker, expressed his confidence that his current visit to Pakistan will result in increased fruitful collaboration between the two countries paving the way for their prosperity and contributing toward world peace. The prime minister pointed to the conflagration in the Gulf, plunging the Muslim world into a crisis of monumental proportion and recalled the two countries had an identical stand on the issue. The two countries wanted the solution of other problems facing the ummah, including Palestine, Afghanistan, and Kashmir through implementation of relevant UN resolutions.

Turning to Kashmir, the prime minister thanked Mr. Karrubi for Iran's open support for Kashmiris right of self-determination. He said India, which was a party along with Pakistan to UN resolution for holding an impartial plebiscite in occupied Kashmir was now flouting its solemn promises through various excuses. Finding no other alternative, the Kashmiri people have been compelled to wage their holy struggle. India had responded by unleashing a reign of terror on them for demanding their legitimate rights. He demanded that the international community bring an end to these atrocities and create conditions for an impartial plebiscite in Kashmir.

In his address of welcome, the speaker of the National Assembly, Mr. Gauhar Ayub Khan, referred to growing cooperation between Pakistan and Iran in various fields.

The deputy leader of the opposition, Sardar Farooq Niaz Khan Leghari, thanked the Iranian leader for his address.

Saudi Envoy Arrives With Letter From King Fahd

BK2402042691 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] Special envoy of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia Shaykh Muhammad Ibrahim arrived in Islamabad yesterday. He has brought a letter from King Fahd for President Ghulam Ishaq Khan.

Envoy Meets Sharif

BK2502054091 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] The Saudi Arabian special envoy, Shaykh Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, called on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in Islamabad yesterday. He apprised the prime minister of the latest Gulf situation and Saudi government's efforts for peaceful solution of this problem. The prime minister praised Saudi Arabia's efforts and informed him of Pakistan's principled stand and measures which are being taken for a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis.

The Saudi envoy also called on Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan.

Khan Meets With Saudi, UK, Iranian Officials

BK2402153691 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 24 Feb 91

[Text] The Saudi Arabian Special emissary, Shaykh Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, called on President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in Islamabad today and handed him over a letter from King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz custodian of the holy mosques. He informed the president of Saudi Arabia's stand on the situation in the Gulf. Expressing deep concern and anguish over the loss of life in the current Gulf war and the damage to the properties of the Muslims, the president hoped that this trend will end soon.

(Mark Lenit Boyd), British Parliamentary Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, also called on the president. They exchanged views on several regional and international issues, especially on the Gulf situation. Referring to Pakistan's stand on the Gulf and Indo-Pakistan relations, the president reiterated that Pakistan is desirous of having peaceful relations with India. He said it is imperative that the Kashmir issue should be resolved according to the relevant UN resolutions and the Simla agreement.

Speaking to the speaker of the Iranian parliament, Hojjat-ol Eslam Mehdi Karrubi, who called on him in Islamabad today, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan has suggested that some permanent arrangement should be devised to solve the crises in the Islamic countries. Appreciating the Soviet Union's recent proposals, the president said these proposals would have become the basis for an acceptable solution and more time should have been given to settle other outstanding issues. Bilateral relations between Iran and Pakistan were also discussed on this occasion and both the leaders expressed their desire to further promote long-standing contacts in all sectors.

Army Chief Returns After Visit To Saudi Arabia

BK2502114091 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] The chief of the army staff, General Mirza Aslam Beg, has returned to Pakistan after a five-day visit to Saudi Arabia. During his stay there, he met Saudi dignitaries and also visited Pakistani troops at Tabuk and Ar'ar Garrison. He also met with King Fahd who emphasized the need for greater collaboration between the two countries to ensure peace and harmony in the region. King Fahd also thanked the government and the people of Pakistan for their support in the defense of Saudi Arabia. He [Beg] also met the allied forces commander, General Norman Schwarzkopf.

Spokesman Welcomes Iraqi Agreement To Withdraw

BK2302085991 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 23 Feb 91

[Text] Pakistan has welcomed the Iraqi agreement to withdraw from Kuwait in accordance with the UN

Security Council resolution 660. This was stated by a Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad today while commenting on President Gorbachev's initiative for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in the Gulf. The spokesman recalled that the peace plan proposed by the prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, has also been based on Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. He stated that the commitment by Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait should pave the way for a peaceful settlement in order to bring to an end the widespread bloodshed and devastation caused by the conflict in the Gulf.

The Foreign Office spokesman reiterated that the future stability of the region depended on strict adherence to the principle of inviolability of international frontiers and the safeguarding of the territorial integrity of all the countries in the region.

France Reportedly Not To Supply Nuclear Plant

BK2402012091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1608 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 22 (AFP)—France has refused to supply Pakistan with a 900-megawatt nuclear plant promised to Islamabad a year ago, Pakistani newspapers said. China, which pledged in November 1989 to build a 300-megawatt nuclear plant, is now hesitating because of funding problems, two English-language newspapers added.

According to THE NATION, Washington pressured France to go back on its commitment to supply Pakistan a plant worth an estimated 10 billion francs (two billion dollars). Washington, which is concerned that Islamabad is trying to build nuclear weapons, is trying to convince other European countries not to transfer technology to Pakistan, THE NATION said.

Another newspaper, THE NEWS, said that financial difficulties with France had arisen, as Pakistan faces a grave economic crisis since Iraq's August 2 invasion of Kuwait. France has not officially informed Pakistan of its decision and was expected to "prolong the financial negotiations as far as possible" without cancelling the deal outright, THE NATION said.

At the conclusion of his visit to Pakistan on February 21 last year, President Francois Mitterrand said, "France pledges to authorise French industrial enterprises ... to make rapidly a technical and commercial offer for the sale of a nuclear power plant to Pakistan." Mr. Mitterrand said at the time that he trusted Pakistan—12 years after a bilateral crisis provoked by France's cancellation of a contract to build a plant to reprocess nuclear fuels.